

survey title:

**Blue Ribbon Commission
Public Comment Form**current report: **Default Report**

Displaying 44 of 102 respondents

Response Type: Normal Response**Collector:** Public Comment Form (Web Link)**Custom Value:** empty**IP Address:** 68.6.111.159**Response Started:** Tue, 4/22/08 10:04:14 AM**Response Modified:** Tue, 4/22/08 12:04:43 PM**1. Please provide the following information.**

Name: - Rosa P. Del Cid, LCSW

Title: - Program Director

Agency/Organization: - Angels Foster Care of Santa Barbara

Address: - 3905 State St, #7-115

City/Town: - Santa Barbara

State: - CA

ZIP/Postal Code: - 93105

Country: - United States

Email Address: - rosa@angelssb.com

Phone Number: - 805.898.0901

2. Are you commenting on behalf of your organization?

No

3. Recommendation 1:

Agree with the selected recommendation

4. Recommendation 1A:

Agree with the selected recommendation

5. Recommendation 1B:

Agree with the selected recommendation

6. Recommendation 2

Agree with the selected recommendation

7. Recommendation 2A

Agree with the selected recommendation

8. Recommendation 2B

Agree with the selected recommendation

9. Recommendation 2C

Agree with the selected recommendation

10. Recommendation 2D

Agree with the selected recommendation

11. Recommendation 2E

Agree with the selected recommendation

12. Recommendation 2F

Agree with the selected recommendation

13. Recommendation 3

Agree with the selected recommendation

14. Recommendation 3A

Agree with the selected recommendation

15. Recommendation 3B

Agree with the selected recommendation

16. Recommendation 3C

Agree with the selected recommendation

17. Recommendation 4

Agree with the selected recommendation

18. Recommendation 4A

Agree with the selected recommendation

19. Recommendation 4B

Agree with the selected recommendation

20. Recommendation 4C

Agree with the selected recommendation

21. Recommendation 4D

Agree with the selected recommendation

22. Recommendation 4E

Agree with the selected recommendation.

[Terms of Use](#) [Privacy Statement](#) [Opt Out/Opt In](#) [Contact Us](#)

Copyright ©1999-2008 SurveyMonkey.com. All Rights Reserved. No portion of this site may be copied without the express written consent of SurveyMonkey.com. 35

INTEROFFICE MEMO



DATE: April 22, 2008

FROM: Rosa E. Gomez, MSW, LCSW **PHONE:** 909-382-3078
Deputy Director, Department of Behavioral Health

TO: The Honorable Marsha Slough
Chair, Policy Council

SUBJECT: California Blue Ribbon Commission on Children in Foster Care –
Draft Recommendations

The Department of Behavioral Health applauds the efforts set in motion in the most premier county in the State of California to address the needs of our foster children. We are pleased to provide input to the Policy Council on the above listed draft recommendations for improving foster care outcomes. Below, you will find a detailed list of praises, additions and suggestions for the California Blue Ribbon Commission.

Recommendation 1

- A. Children and families need access to a range of services to prevent removal whenever possible.
- DBH has implemented two programs under the MHSA funding.
 - Children's Crisis Response Team provides 24/7 crisis intervention to children/youth and their families throughout the county.
 - Success First is the early wraparound program which provides wraparound services to children/youth and their families in order to prevent removal of children from their parents.
 - DBH, in partnership with the courts, participates in Drug Court, Mental Health Court and CITA (Court for Individualized Treatment of Adolescents)
 - A DBH Alcohol and Drug Counselor is co-located in the DCS office. Improved access to expert consultation is available to social workers.
- B. If foster care placement is necessary, children and families should have access to appropriate services and timely court reviews that lead to permanency as quickly as possible.
- DBH, in partnership with DCS (Department of Children Services) has developed and implemented the Healthy Homes Program. Foster children receive a "strength-based" screening by a mental health professional. The screening determines if further services are needed for the child/youth. The Healthy Homes Liaison (DBH) is co-located at the DCS office for optimum communication and coordination.
 - San Bernardino County has held its second Foster Care Summit to address the needs of foster care children/youth.

- It is agreed that we need to "extend the age when Children receive foster care assistance from age 18 to age 21". This was one of the issues brought up in the Foster Care Summit.
- Funding through the MHSA has opened the doors of the One Stop TAY Center for Transition Age Youth emancipating from the foster care system. Services at the center address the life domains required for successful adulthood.

Recommendation 2

- A. The courts must have sufficient resources to meet their obligations to children and families in the child welfare system. **Suggestion – Appropriate level of funding should be provided to meet this obligation.**
- C. Local court practices should facilitate the attendance of children, parents, and caregivers in hearings. **Suggestion - Include a team approach in the court.**

Recommendation 3

- A. The Judicial Council and the State Department of Social Services should work cooperatively with all stakeholders to ensure optimal sharing of information to promote decision making that supports the well-being of children and families in the child welfare system.
- **Suggestion – Improve the release/exchange of information to treating psychiatrists and other treatment staff in different settings in order to improve the quality of care for the children, e.g. when a foster mother brings a child to a psychiatrist appointment, no information is available on the child's history such as prior treatment, hospitalizations, medications, school placement, etc.**
 - **Suggestion – Funding to assign a nurse/case manager to all foster children who can facilitate all aspects of treatment on a consistent basis and can speak with the doctors, teachers and parents/caregivers and help advocate in all areas of the children's lives.**
- B. The presiding judge of the juvenile court and the county social or human services director should convene multidisciplinary commissions at the local level to identify and resolve local system concerns and build the capacity to provide a continuum of services.
- **Suggestion – The multidisciplinary commission should include a child psychiatrist and a mental health professional.**

Recommendation 4

- B. No child or family should be denied services because it is unclear who should pay for them. Funding limitations that prohibit or delay the delivery of services to these children and families should be addressed through coordinated and more flexible funding.
- We fully support this.

- **Suggestion – In addition, there should be a mechanism for the compensation for the provision of mental health indirect services for court dependents, e.g. payments for completing JV220 forms and activities relevant to the quality of care provided to foster children/youths.**
 - **Suggestion – The state should create a JCBHS (Juvenile Court Behavioral Health Services) in each county to address the psychotropic medication needs of foster care children/youth.**
- C. The Judicial Council, along with other branches of federal, state and local courts, government, businesses, foundations and community service organizations should work together to establish a fund to provide foster youth the money and resources they need to participate in extracurricular activities and programs to help make positive transitions into adulthood.
- This was one of the suggestions from the 2006 Foster Care Summit. San Bernardino County is fortunate to have the Children's Fund but they cannot and should not carry the brunt of this expense.

In closing, I would like to recognize that the County of San Bernardino is at the forefront of making changes in the Foster Care System through the efforts of and collaboration with the leadership of the Children's Policy Council, the Department of Children's Services, the Children's Network, the Probation Department, the Courts and the Department of Behavioral Health. These changes will have a greater impact on the lives of the children/youth and their families of San Bernardino County.

INTEROFFICE MEMO



County of San Bernardino

DATE May 5, 2008 & May 8, 2008**PHONE** 388-0242**FROM** DeAnna Avey-Motikeit, Director
Department of Children's Services**TO** Honorable Marsha Slough
Juvenile Court

SUBJECT California Blue Ribbon Commission on Children in Foster Care – (See additional comments at the end of this memo).

Recommendation 1 – Reasonable Efforts to Prevent Removal and Achieve Permanency.

1a) Children and families need access to a range of services to prevent removal whenever possible. All reasonable efforts should be made to maintain children at home in safe and stable families. The courts should make an informed finding as to whether these efforts actually have been made.

Response: San Bernardino County is a Family 2 Family County and conducts Team Decision meetings prior to removal to address a safety plan.

1b) If foster-care placement is necessary, children and families should have access to appropriate services and timely court review that lead to permanency as quickly as possible. Service delivery and court review should ensure that all reasonable efforts are made to return children home, to make sure families and workers comply with case plans, and to achieve timely and stable transitions home or, if necessary, to place with relatives or in permanent, stable family.

Response: TDM for placement changes. Adam Walsh is a case that slows the process.

Children and families receive continuous and comprehensive services if a child enters the delinquency system from foster care;

Response: Probation is a Title IV-E provider and should develop more Family Centered Services.

Identified Issues and Summary of Main Recommendation 2 Court Reforms

Response: Dependency should occur in Family Friendly arena not a courthouse.

2e) All courts should have nonadversial programs available for children and families to use to resolve legal and social issues when appropriate.

Families in all counties have access to specific nonadversial child welfare based practices such as family group conferencing, team decision-making, and family team meetings.

Response: San Bernardino County practices both FGDM and TDM.

Recommendation 3 – Collaboration Between Courts and Partnering Agencies

Because the courts share responsibility with child welfare, *Probation* and other partners for the well being of children in foster care, the courts, child welfare, and partnering agencies must work together to prioritize the needs of children and families in each system and remove barriers that keep agencies from working together effectively.

These commissions focus on key areas of local concern and activities, including:

Response: Foster Youth Summit 2006 – 2008.

4c) Children in foster care and partnering agencies have access to reliable funding to support their access to extracurricular activities and transitional programs.

4d) Educational services for foster youth should be expanded to increase access to education and to improve the quality of those services.

The Child Welfare Council prioritize foster children's educational rights and work with educators to establish categorical program monitoring to oversee compliance with education laws and regulations that support foster youth in school;

Response: Children do not want to be identified as "Foster Youth" at school.

4e) States and counties should be given permission to use federal funding more flexibly. Flexible funding should be used to address the needs of children and families in a timely manner that recognizes the child's developmental needs and relationship with his or her parents, guardian, and extended family. The commission supports key financial recommendations of the Pew Commission on Children in Foster Care.

Reinvestment of penalties levied in the federal Child and Family Services Review process into program improvement activities; and

Response: Moratorium of penalties or sanctions on performance outcomes until such time funding is provided to meet the services required for outcome compliance.

Page 3

May 8, 2008

California Blue Ribbon Commission on Children in Foster Care

Disproportional

The courts and child welfare agencies should examine and **in collaboration with universities** address why a disproportionate number of African-American and Native American children are in the child welfare system.

Extended support for transitioning youth

The Judicial Council should urge Congress and the state Legislature to extend the age for children to receive **foster-care assistance from 18 to 21, should the services to 18-21 years look differently than services to younger dependents.**

A voice in court

The courts should ensure that all participants in dependency proceedings, including children and parents, have an opportunity to be present and heard in court. CASA programs should be available in all counties. **CASA services should be consistent among and between counties.**

1B If foster-care placement is necessary, children and families should have access to appropriate services and timely court reviews that lead to permanency as quickly as possible. Service delivery and court review should ensure that all reasonable efforts are made to return children home, to make sure families and workers comply with case plans, and to achieve timely and stable transitions home or, if necessary, to place with relatives or in another permanent, stable family.

Caseloads will increase with the extended service time also include funding for additional staff. The Child Welfare system is currently under funded for staffing.

2B All participants in dependency hearings, including children and families, should have an opportunity to be heard in court.

All parties in each case be identified and engaged as early as possible. A particular emphasis should be placed on finding fathers and identifying Indian tribes where applicable; **ICWA inquiry made at removal and every court hearing.**

Relatives be identified as soon as possible and policies to promote relative assessment, placement, and connections be further developed and implemented; and **Family Information Sheets are completed at detention hearing. Adam Walsh will have impact on timeliness. Relative Approval Unit responds 24/7.**

4D Educational services for foster youth should be expanded to increase access to education and to improve the quality of those services.

Courts and partnering agencies ensure that foster children receive the full education they are entitled to, including the support they need to graduate from high school.

Page 4

May 8, 2008

California Blue Ribbon Commission on Children in Foster Care

This includes tutoring and participation in extracurricular activities. The courts should require other agencies to justify any denial of such services to foster youth in school; How does this get operational zed?

Foster Youth Services grants be expanded to include all children age five or older, including those in kinship placements, because close to half of foster children are placed with kin and Foster Youth Services is not currently funded to serve those children. **How are the schools going to fund the expansion of Foster Youth Services? 4 billion cut @ state level.**

How is this commission or its recommendations different from other reform efforts that have come before it?

Other key factors that help differentiate this commission include: 4) an implementation plan that will take into account the state's fiscal realities as well as the long-term goal of improving the lives of foster children and their families; and No it does not.

DAM/tgw

5/8/08

survey title:

**Blue Ribbon Commission
Public Comment Form**

current report: **Default Report**

Displaying 39 of 102 respondents

Response Type: Normal Response

Collector: Public Comment Form (Web Link)

Custom Value: empty

IP Address: 68.126.139.97

Response Started: Tue, 4/15/08 11:40:38 AM

Response Modified: Tue, 4/15/08 12:35:26 PM

1. Please provide the following information.

Name: - Susan Dorsey

Title: - Executive Director

Agency/Organization: - CASA El Dorado

Address: - 347 Main Street

City/Town: - Placerville

State: - CA

ZIP/Postal Code: - 95667

Country: - USA

Email Address: - director@casaeldorado.org

Phone Number: - 530.622.9882

2. Are you commenting on behalf of your organization?

Yes

3. Recommendation 1:

Agree with the selected recommendation subject to modifications suggested below

Comment: We believe that it is not always in the best interest of the child to stay in their environment. The main concern safety and emotional stability.

4. Recommendation 1A:

Agree with the selected recommendation

5. Recommendation 1B:

Agree with the selected recommendation

Comment: The main area of focus for our organization is extending foster care to 21 or beyond.

6. Recommendation 2

Agree with the selected recommendation

7. Recommendation 2A

Agree with the selected recommendation

8. Recommendation 2B

Agree with the selected recommendation

Comment: Transportation within reason. Not for CASA programs to take on. We believe that part of the parent's responsibility is finding transportation in a visible effort to show they can care for their children.

9. Recommendation 2C

Agree with the selected recommendation

Comment: Especially the last bullet point.

10. Recommendation 2D

Agree with the selected recommendation

Comment: Especially additional funding for CASA programs, ensuring that all eligible children receive an advocate.

11. Recommendation 2E

Agree with the selected recommendation

12. Recommendation 2F

Agree with the selected recommendation

13. Recommendation 3

Agree with the selected recommendation

Comment: Wrap services, et al

14. Recommendation 3A

Agree with the selected recommendation subject to modifications suggested below

Comment: We have identified that there needs to be more education for DHS on the role of the CASA and the services they provide. Cooperation with CASA should be strongly encouraged from upper management. With such heavy case loads for SWers, advocates can be such a great resource, which is not always recognized.

15. Recommendation 3B

Agree with the selected recommendation

Comment: Our organization has established a ad hoc committee focused on aging out youth and the challenges faced as they prepare to emancipate. We have adopted a resolution to partner with related community agencies to accomplish the above recommendations. This committee is comprised of members of both staff and board.

16. Recommendation 3C

Agree with the selected recommendation

17. Recommendation 4

Agree with the selected recommendation

18. Recommendation 4A

Agree with the selected recommendation

19. Recommendation 4B

Agree with the selected recommendation

20. Recommendation 4C

Agree with the selected recommendation

21. Recommendation 4D

Agree with the selected recommendation

Comment: Including youth 18 to 21 years of age.

22. Recommendation 4E

Agree with the selected recommendation

[Terms of Use](#) [Privacy Statement](#) [Opt Out/Opt In](#) [Contact Us](#)

Copyright ©1999-2008 SurveyMonkey.com. All Rights Reserved. No portion of this site may be copied without the express written consent of SurveyMonkey.com. 35

survey title:

**Blue Ribbon Commission
Public Comment Form**current report: **Default Report**

Displaying 52 of 102 respondents

Response Type: Normal Response**Collector:** Public Comment Form (Web Link)**Custom Value:** empty**IP Address:** 66.81.240.137**Response Started:** Wed, 4/23/08 1:26:18 PM**Response Modified:** Wed, 4/23/08 2:18:54 PM**1. Please provide the following information.**

Name: - Kathryn L. Duran

Title: - Director

Agency/Organization: - UCRCOA

Address: - PO Box 436

City/Town: - El Dorado

State: - CA

ZIP/Postal Code: - 95623

Country: - USA

Email Address: - chowchowkathi@yahoo.com

Phone Number: - 530-903-9121

2. Are you commenting on behalf of your organization?

Yes

3. Recommendation 1:

Agree with the selected recommendation subject to modifications suggested below

Comment: This is all based on the fact that the Dept of Social Services, local courts and child welfare agencies are honest in their "investigation" as to the needs of these children. Social Workers are the connection between the families and the Court system. Since there is no accountability for the Social Workers or the Courts, this is a great recommendation but I cannot see that it will help the children. CPS has a set of State mandated policies and procedures that must be met when dealing with families and children. Since they can violate these policies with no accountability whatsoever I cannot see this would help any family or child.

4. Recommendation 1A:

Agree with the selected recommendation subject to modifications suggested below

Comment: Again, this is an excellent recommendation. It will only be carried out if the social worker does her/his job. If they don't, there is no accountability whatsoever and the children are the ones who suffer.

5. Recommendation 1B:

Agree with the selected recommendation subject to modifications suggested below

Comment: There seems to be a common factor in each and every one of these recommendations. Social worker and juvenile court accountability. There is absolutely none. All of the power is given to Social Workers with no accountability.

6. Recommendation 2

Agree with the selected recommendation subject to modifications suggested below

Comment: The local trial courts must be made accountable when they do not follow this recommendation.

7. Recommendation 2A

Agree with the selected recommendation subject to modifications suggested below

Comment: The Judge that heard my trial did not follow any of these recommendations. In fact, the CPS Social workers filed a petition againsts me for VOLUNTARILY placing children with them. The petition stated that they took one of the children because he was "AT RISK". No information as to why he was at risk. During the trial, Social Worker testified that I had TOLD her to take the child. Clear and Evident Perjury here. The Judge never questioned it. Again..we are looking at Accountability

8. Recommendation 2B

Agree with the selected recommendation subject to modifications suggested below

Comment: A matter of Accountability yet again. The child I had guardianship of NEVER contacted me, though I had been his sole source of support since he was seven yrs old. In fact this child's Attorney tried to make me out to be and completely irresponsible individual because I allowed the child to stay with his mother at a time he was in crises, yet fought to allow the child to be permanently with his mother. None of this was questioned by anyone.

9. Recommendation 2C

Agree with the selected recommendation subject to modifications suggested below

Comment: Yet again...this is a wonderful recommendation. Yet there are already policies and procedures in place that would support this. This is what all of these people are supposed to be doing already yet they don't and there is no one who cares about it. Accountability.

10. Recommendation 2D

Agree with the selected recommendation subject to modifications suggested below

Comment: Accountability

11. Recommendation 2E

Agree with the selected recommendation subject to modifications suggested below

Comment: Accountability

12. Recommendation 2F

Agree with the selected recommendation subject to modifications suggested below

Comment: Accountability

13. Recommendation 3

Agree with the selected recommendation subject to modifications suggested below

Comment: Accountability

14. Recommendation 3A

Agree with the selected recommendation subject to modifications suggested below

Comment: Accountability

15. Recommendation 3B

Agree with the selected recommendation subject to modifications suggested below

Comment: Accountability

16. Recommendation 3C

Agree with the selected recommendation subject to modifications suggested below

Comment: Accountability.

17. Recommendation 4

Agree with the selected recommendation subject to modifications suggested below

Comment: Accountability

18. Recommendation 4A

Agree with the selected recommendation subject to modifications suggested below

Comment: Truth and Accountability.

19. Recommendation 4B

Agree with the selected recommendation subject to modifications suggested below

Comment: Accountability. Again, the Commission is recommending policies that are already supposed to be in practice. The Judicial Council does not so it now and will not do it in the future unless the agencies that are in control of this entire system begin to be held accountable.

20. Recommendation 4C

Agree with the selected recommendation subject to modifications suggested below

Comment: Yes this is already in place. Once they make the procedures that will eliminate the barriers, who is going to hold the Social Worker responsible for informing the foster parents?

21. Recommendation 4D

Agree with the selected recommendation subject to modifications suggested below

Comment: I have been a foster parent for 15 years. There is no funding needed, no additional services needed. I received more than enough funding to pay for the care of these children. My children were involved in sports, extra-curricular activities, had stock market accounts. None of that mattered once a Social Worker was pissed off at me because I DARED to write a letter to her superiors. Was she held accountable for destroying my life and the children I cared for? Not at all..she committed perjury in a Juvenile Court hearing and not a single person cared. Again..Accountability. Anyone who is begging for money for these "poor" foster kids needs to look again.

22. Recommendation 4E

Do not agree with selected recommendation

Comment: The funding needs to be cut for Social Services. That funding needs to be provided to Law Enforcement Agencies who can be held accountable for false accusations. A very LIMITED funding should be supplied to Social Services and Social Workers should be held accountable for the jobs they are required to do.

[Terms of Use](#) [Privacy Statement](#) [Opt Out/Opt In](#) [Contact Us](#)

Copyright ©1999-2008 SurveyMonkey.com. All Rights Reserved. No portion of this site may be copied without the express written consent of SurveyMonkey.com. 35

survey title:

**Blue Ribbon Commission
Public Comment Form**current report: **Default Report**

Displaying 6 of 102 respondents

Response Type: Normal Response**Collector:** Public Comment Form (Web Link)**Custom Value:** empty**IP Address:** 71.108.183.218**Response Started:** Sat, 3/15/08 1:57:36 PM**Response Modified:** Sat, 3/15/08 2:06:50 PM**1. Please provide the following information.**

Name: - ANNETTE EDWARDS

Title: - VICTIM/MOTHER

Agency/Organization: - SELF

Address: - 649 MEEKER DR.

City/Town: - LA PUENTE

State: - CA

ZIP/Postal Code: - 91746

Country: - CALIFORNIA

Email Address: - jsmnmendoza@yahoo.com

Phone Number: - 6264941073

2. Are you commenting on behalf of your organization?

No

3. Recommendation 1:

Agree with the selected recommendation subject to modifications suggested below

4. Recommendation 1A:

Agree with the selected recommendation subject to modifications suggested below

5. Recommendation 1B:

Agree with the selected recommendation subject to modifications suggested below

6. Recommendation 2

Agree with the selected recommendation subject to modifications suggested below

7. Recommendation 2A

Agree with the selected recommendation subject to modifications suggested below

8. Recommendation 2B

Agree with the selected recommendation subject to modifications suggested below

9. Recommendation 2C

Agree with the selected recommendation subject to modifications suggested below

10. Recommendation 2D

Agree with the selected recommendation subject to modifications suggested below

11. Recommendation 2E

Agree with the selected recommendation subject to modifications suggested below

12. Recommendation 2F

Agree with the selected recommendation subject to modifications suggested below

13. Recommendation 3

Agree with the selected recommendation subject to modifications suggested below

14. Recommendation 3A

Agree with the selected recommendation subject to modifications suggested below

15. Recommendation 3B

Agree with the selected recommendation subject to modifications suggested below

16. Recommendation 3C

Agree with the selected recommendation subject to modifications suggested below

17. Recommendation 4

Agree with the selected recommendation subject to modifications suggested below

18. Recommendation 4A

Agree with the selected recommendation subject to modifications suggested below

19. Recommendation 4B

Agree with the selected recommendation subject to modifications suggested below

20. Recommendation 4C

Agree with the selected recommendation subject to modifications suggested below

21. Recommendation 4D

Agree with the selected recommendation subject to modifications suggested below

22. Recommendation 4E

Agree with the selected recommendation subject to modifications suggested below

[Terms of Use](#) [Privacy Statement](#) [Opt Out/Opt In](#) [Contact Us](#)

Copyright ©1999-2008 SurveyMonkey.com. All Rights Reserved. No portion of this site may be copied without the express written consent of SurveyMonkey.com. 35

survey title:

**Blue Ribbon Commission
Public Comment Form**current report: **Default Report**

Displaying 84 of 102 respondents

Response Type: Normal Response**Collector:** Public Comment Form (Web Link)**Custom Value:** empty**IP Address:** 170.213.132.253**Response Started:** Mon, 5/12/08 11:02:49 AM**Response Modified:** Tue, 5/13/08 5:25:01 PM**1. Please provide the following information.**

Name: - Ana Espana

Title: - Supervising Attorney

Agency/Organization: - Office of Children's Counsel

Address: - 8525 Gibbs Drive, Suite 300

City/Town: - San Diego

State: - CA

ZIP/Postal Code: - 92123

Country: - USA

Email Address: - ana.espana@sdcounty.ca.gov

Phone Number: - (858) 974-5703

2. Are you commenting on behalf of your organization?

Yes

3. Recommendation 1:

Agree with the selected recommendation

4. Recommendation 1A:

Agree with the selected recommendation subject to modifications suggested below

Comment: Children should receive timely and appropriate services consistent with their rights under law, and in the case where the law is silent, consistent with best practice. For example, the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) recommends annual well-child exams for children over 3, however, HHS regulations require only that exams be consistent with the CHDP schedule. While appropriate for infants and toddlers, the CHDP schedule requires less exams the older the child gets, i.e., a 13 year old is not required to get another health care exam until 17. Also, the American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry (AAPD) recommends bi-annual dental exams starting at age one, however, HHS regulations require foster youth receive only annual exams beginning at age three. Foster youth come into the foster care system with significant health and education needs. As a system, we ought to provide our youth with care

consistent with statutory mandates and best practice, and build into the system ways to disseminate and collect data to help courts and agencies ensure appropriate care is provided. As an example, CWS/CMS should be programmed to send reminders to according to the health care schedules proposed by AAP and AAPD. Also, funding needs to be provided to establish/expand resources provided to parents and children. And finally, more outreach is needed to providers who are bilingual and trained in and knowledgeable about cultural norms and sensitivities, especially for our African, Asian, and Middle Eastern populations.

5. Recommendation 1B:

Agree with the selected recommendation subject to modifications suggested below

Comment: While suggested in these recommendations, it cannot be said enough that each participant must take a moment and think about life in foster care through the eyes of each child. How many former foster youth have we heard from who spoke about feeling as if they were a case file, rather than a real person? Training efforts should always include current or former foster youth. Also, the AOC has developed a booklet entitled, "Every Child, Every Hearing". This booklet is designed to help courts and advocates remember all aspects of the child's development. This booklet should continue to be disseminated and training on these issues should continue to be provided. The court and counsel should receive information regarding the reason(s) that a family member or non-relative extended family member was denied/rejected as a placement option. Currently the information is considered confidential and not even a summary regarding the reason(s) for the denial is available. More outreach is needed to recruit, train, and license foster-families for our African, Asian, and Middle Eastern populations so that placement efforts can address language, cultural, and religious needs of children. Post-foster care services should be available to young adults who are former foster youth, up to age 25. These services should be available regardless of whether the child aged out of the system, emancipated prior to their 18th birthday, or entered into a legal guardianship.

6. Recommendation 2

Agree with the selected recommendation

7. Recommendation 2A

Agree with the selected recommendation subject to modifications suggested below

Comment: The rules of court require that attorneys who practice dependency law have ongoing training and education. Training must include such topics as child development, domestic violence, child abuse and neglect, and substance abuse. Currently the AOC is helping to train attorneys. Similar training should be provided to all judicial officers assigned to the juvenile court.

8. Recommendation 2B

Agree with the selected recommendation subject to modifications suggested below

Comment: Bringing children to court needs to be supported by the courts, advocates, child welfare services, and caretakers. On far too many occasions we have advocated for children to come to court, only to learn later that care providers were told by social workers that attendance was not necessary.

9. Recommendation 2C

Agree with the selected recommendation

10. Recommendation 2D

Agree with the selected recommendation subject to modifications suggested below

Comment: We are not sure that having dependency law on the state bar exam is necessary. Strict enforcement of the certification requirements in this area post-bar (as required by rules of court) is more likely to ensure competent counsel is available for appointment. Also, the National Association of Counsel for Children provides testing for attorneys who wish to become certified child welfare law specialists. Pursuing this certification should be encouraged by law offices. Creation of a state bar section is a good idea although fees should be reduced for attorneys whose practice is at least 80% in this area so as to encourage participation. Along with encouraging the development of local or regional family resource centers to ensure that the nondependency legal needs of children are addressed, the state bar should become actively involved with encouraging attorneys to provide pro bono services to children in foster care. Local family resource centers should include access to computers and the internet to assist children and parents with communication with attorneys as well as access to local services and resources.

11. Recommendation 2E

Agree with the selected recommendation subject to modifications suggested below

Comment: Mediation for reasons other than custody order recommendations should only be done with mediators who are trained in dependency practice to ensure they have a full understanding of the unique issues, timelines, and concerns involved with these families. Team decisionmaking, family group conferencing, etc. are all successful child welfare-based practices. They should, however, result in a summary report to be provided to the court and all counsel including information on who was present, what issues were discussed, and what resolutions or plans of action were decided upon.

12. Recommendation 2F

Agree with the selected recommendation

13. Recommendation 3

Agree with the selected recommendation subject to modifications suggested below

Comment: Who ARE the stakeholders should be described somewhere in this recommendation and should certainly include the regional centers, who, in our experience, are among the hardest to engage.

14. Recommendation 3A

Agree with the selected recommendation

15. Recommendation 3B

Agree with the selected recommendation

16. Recommendation 3C

Agree with the selected recommendation

17. Recommendation 4

Agree with the selected recommendation

18. Recommendation 4A

Agree with the selected recommendation

19. Recommendation 4B

Agree with the selected recommendation

Comment: Parents should not be required to pay for services during reunification. Even "sliding scale" payment options often do not account for the many financial responsibilities of these families, including but not limited to, having to provide financial assistance for two or more households because of a parent being required to move out of the family home for a time, or to assist relatives who are caring for children who have been removed.

20. Recommendation 4C

Agree with the selected recommendation

Comment: It has been our dream that every age-appropriate foster youth be offered the opportunity to participate in extra-curricular activities. Social worker reports should include a statement describing the activities the child is involved in, and if the child is not involved, to explain why not. We should provide training as to the value and necessity of extra-curricular activities. It needs to be made clear (although it is sad that it isn't obvious) that extra-curriculars not only normalize the lives of children, but help to build character, discipline, and life passion. All of these traits will help increase children's productivity in life. It should be noted that lack of money is not always the barrier. Many care providers who do not have their kids in activities simply won't make the time or effort, or don't recognize that it is important. This needs to change. While there are scholarships, camperships, etc. available to youth, it is often the motivation by caregivers that appears often to be lacking.

21. Recommendation 4D

Agree with the selected recommendation subject to modifications suggested below

Comment: The delivery of services also needs to be focused on the 0-3 population of foster youth. It is currently required that these children be referred to early intervention programs for assessment. If found eligible for these services, there must be follow-up to ensure children have been linked to and are receiving the services. Same should be true for children 3-5 who are eligible for preschool special education services. For children not eligible for special services, Head Start and/or other preschool options should be pursued for every foster youth. Also, all counties should actively recruit interested persons who are willing to hold education rights for children in foster care. While each court and agency should first look at relatives, mentors, care providers and others, unfortunately, on far too many occasions there are still children who have no one available to advocate on their behalf in education settings. Child welfare and the courts should work together to develop a list of persons willing to hold education rights. These persons should also be trained on education laws and foster youth issues. Perhaps this effort could be part of a family resource center described above.

22. Recommendation 4E

Agree with the selected recommendation subject to modifications suggested below

Comment: Perhaps this is already available, but we'd suggest reporting requirements for care providers be available that show how foster care dollars have been used. This would promote accountability for the funds as well as

decrease the ability for anyone to use these dollars for personal gain rather than the benefit of the children in their care. We are also concerned with the number of adoptions that have backfired and children who are "given back" to the system after a failed adoption. We've also had adoptive children come back into the dependency system due to abuse and/or neglect by their adoptive parents. We need to be more careful about who we choose to adopt our youth. It is not enough that they offer food and a roof. They must be homes where there is love and nurturance, and an understanding of what it takes to help a child become a productive citizen.

[Terms of Use](#) [Privacy Statement](#) [Opt Out/Opt In](#) [Contact Us](#)

Copyright ©1999-2008 SurveyMonkey.com. All Rights Reserved. No portion of this site may be copied without the express written consent of SurveyMonkey.com. 35

survey title:

**Blue Ribbon Commission
Public Comment Form**current report: **Default Report**

Displaying 5 of 102 respondents

Response Type: Normal Response**Collector:** Public Comment Form (Web Link)**Custom Value:** empty**IP Address:** 207.62.247.81**Response Started:** Sat, 3/15/08 11:32:31 AM**Response Modified:** Sat, 3/15/08 12:58:38 PM**1. Please provide the following information.**

Name: - MYRNA FERNANDEZ

Title: - NA

Agency/Organization: - NA

Address: - 1418 BELLEVUE AVENUE, APT. 309

City/Town: - BURLINGAME

State: - CA

ZIP/Postal Code: - 94010

Country: - U.S.A.

Email Address: - MYRNAFERNANDEZ@MSN.COM

Phone Number: - 650-343-2580

2. Are you commenting on behalf of your organization?

No Response

3. Recommendation 1:

Do not agree with selected recommendation

Comment: There is a part of the suggestion which you have above that is just too easy for the social workers to not abide by, when it comes to "reasonable efforts." The part where it says "Whenever possible." We all already know that social workers and their counterparts won't abide by the law nor their C.P.S. Handbook or C.P.S. Manual. We need more than JUST improvement. We need an entire overhaul of the system. Children are taken away every day from their loving homes. AND not given back. That's where the \$30,000 state incentive for each child plus \$5,000 for each child, federal bonus, comes in. Children are our future, and these children are being robbed of everything in their lives because they are wrongfully removed from a loving parent without proof or evidence. You all know that this is wrong! Just stop the corruption PLEASE! don't keep suggesting these "reasonable efforts" when you already have planned that you still will receive those incentives in some way. I mean, REALLY.

4. Recommendation 1A:

Do not agree with selected recommendation

Comment: The problem you have here is obvious. Judges, and anyone else involved in a C.P.S. case know very well that drugs is the first thing that a C.P.S. worker will suggest to inform a parent that she or he is mentally ill. I have seen too many parents where there is no case, C.P.S. will start a case by suggesting to take a psychological evaluation (a 7/30) and then turn the test around by informing the parent that she or he is bipolar. C.P.S. needs a completely overhaul. They cannot tell the difference between a parent who is mentally ill versus a parent who is not mentally ill at all. Therefore, a parent who is not mentally ill should not be coerced into taking any medication, nor should their child or children. This is illegal. When it comes to investigation of any C.P.S. cases, C.P.S. social worker(s) have no knowledge of real abuse that exists in this country. IT IS A DAMN SHAME THAT EVERYONE MAKES MONEY OFF OUR CHILDREN. IT IS A DAMN SHAME!

5. Recommendation 1B:

Do not agree with selected recommendation

Comment: The part of where you say "Children who cannot return home receive services and court reviews to enable them to successfully transition into a permanent home and into adulthood." The problem here is, again, that C.P.S. nor the judges, nor courts do anything in keeping a parent/child relationship. My daughter was taken from me more than 14 years ago and no proof was ever given to the courts. They placed my daughter with her father, not even giving me the time of day. The father alienated my child from me and hid her from me. My daughter is now 17 years old and in July of last year, Susan Jakubowski, granted my child's father a restraining order that would last until after she is 18 years old. This father had repetitively kept my daughter from me in the past years.

6. Recommendation 2

Do not agree with selected recommendation

Comment: A mother, for instance, is never treated in a manner that is fair. I should know. I was treated very badly by 4 social workers when my daughter was wrongfully removed from my care years ago. If C.P.S. workers treated mothers fairly, then maybe the courts wouldn't be given custody to men child abusers???? The system is biased against women because of the amount of Father's rights organizations out there at this time. If you want to really have all parties being treated fairly, then stop siding with the parents who have abused their children. It is WRONG!

7. Recommendation 2A

Do not agree with selected recommendation

Comment: The courts are too quick to terminate rights of parents, WITHOUT even serving the parent. We all know that when one's rights are being terminated without notice that is ILLEGAL! We also know that C.P.S. sets up parents to kidnap our children from us. AND doesn't go by the book, as is recommended. C.P.S. states that certain laws don't apply to parents when one is accused of child abuse. Until C.P.S. can prove that a parent is guilty, the law here in the United States of America is: "INNOCENT TIL PROVEN GUILTY"

8. Recommendation 2B

Do not agree with selected recommendation

Comment: Whenever a child is removed from a loving home, and the parent's rights are terminated, that parent needs to be served with papers. This is the United States of America, and there are many laws which are being broken by the

government, just because their power is overabused.

9. Recommendation 2C

Do not agree with selected recommendation

Comment: Any evidence which the C.P.S. people say they have against a parent cannot be used until the parent see it. C.P.S. DOES this too many times and the parents who is being falsely accused of abusing their child, doesn't even see anything, because C.P.S. will not show the "so-called" evidence to that parent. The C.P.S. social workers, and type of social workers should not slander a parent in any way. If they don't have PROOF or EVIDENCE, then the case should be dismissed!

10. Recommendation 2D

Do not agree with selected recommendation

Comment: A lot of this suggestions won't be followed, because the C.P.S. workers will make up their own laws.

11. Recommendation 2E

Do not agree with selected recommendation

Comment: Reunification is what C.P.S. is strongly against. Why? because when a parent has their children removed, again, incentives are made off that child. When a child is placed in foster care, \$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$ is what C.P.S. is more interested in. The "best interest of a child" is not even important to C.P.S. nor any entity affiliated with C.P.S. the whole entire legal system is unfair and corrupt. Restraining orders are placed against parents who have done no wrong, and these parents are blocked from having any type of communication with their children. Do you have a solution for C.P.S. restraining parents from seeing their children?????? I didn't think so!

12. Recommendation 2F

Agree with the selected recommendation subject to modifications suggested below

Comment: The only way you will be able to get the above mentioned people to work with you on this is if you actually are there to see exactly what is they are doing. Otherwise, this suggestion is as good as nothing!

13. Recommendation 3

Do not agree with selected recommendation

Comment: The courts, first of all, do not care about the "well-being of children in foster care." If they did, we wouldn't have so many children dying in foster care every second of the day. As long as there is incentive and bonuses, etc. for any court, judge, attorney, this will continue and there will be no reform in place.

14. Recommendation 3A

Do not agree with selected recommendation

Comment: The use of psychotropic medications in this state and throughout the United States of America has increased by 100%. C.P.S. is drugging children with psychotropic drugs at the tender age of 2 years old. Now, you tell me, who is the one who has a mental health issue here? Definitely NOT the parent here.

15. Recommendation 3B

Do not agree with selected recommendation

Comment: You need to enforce the public understanding of children being robbed of their lives in this country. My goodness, if you care anything about our children at all, then stop the incentives coming into these agencies. Everyone is making a buck on our kids, MAN!

16. Recommendation 3C

No Response

17. Recommendation 4

Do not agree with selected recommendation

Comment: When there is funding included where it concerns our children, we have a nationwide problem here. it's not only the foster children who die every day, but when you place a child who should not have been removed from their loving homes in the first place, that child also is further at risk of being abused again. Statistics show already this information. start taking a deeper look at who is really controlling the government here!

18. Recommendation 4A

Do not agree with selected recommendation

Comment: You do not mention here what it is these children go through when they are placed with abusive surrounding. THEY ARE FURTHER ABUSED! DRUGS are given to these children. \$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$ from both state and federal funding for all social workers involved in one C.P.S. case and the judges, etc. make money galore.

19. Recommendation 4B

Do not agree with selected recommendation

Comment: stop the damn funding!

20. Recommendation 4C

Do not agree with selected recommendation

21. Recommendation 4D

Do not agree with selected recommendation

Comment: WE HAVE A PROBLEM HERE WITH THESE SUGGESTIONS! NOTHING WILL BE SOLVED UNLESS YOU BEING TO LOOK DEEPER AT WHAT IS REALLY HAPPENING HERE! HELLO?????

22. Recommendation 4E

Do not agree with selected recommendation

Comment: There should no Federal adoption assistance being given when a child is being kidnapped from a loving parent. No fundingPERIOD!

[Terms of Use](#) [Privacy Statement](#) [Opt Out/Opt In](#) [Contact Us](#)

Copyright ©1999-2008 SurveyMonkey.com. All Rights Reserved. No portion of this site may be copied without the express written consent of SurveyMonkey.com. 35

survey title:

**Blue Ribbon Commission
Public Comment Form**current report: **Default Report**

Displaying 61 of 102 respondents

Response Type: Normal Response**Collector:** Public Comment Form (Web Link)**Custom Value:** empty**IP Address:** 68.189.63.176**Response Started:** Sun, 5/4/08 11:04:19 PM**Response Modified:** Sun, 5/4/08 11:59:47 PM**1. Please provide the following information.**

Name: - Charles Ferrari

Title: - Mr.

Agency/Organization: - NFPCAR

Address: - PO Box 2301

City/Town: - Cottonwood

State: - CA

ZIP/Postal Code: - 96022

Country: - USA

Email Address: - chuck@rscraps.com

Phone Number: - 530-347-1314

2. Are you commenting on behalf of your organization?

Yes

3. Recommendation 1:

Agree with the selected recommendation subject to modifications suggested below

Comment: My only additional recommendation is that the agencies involved know the complete dynamics of the Parents. Also, many times, there is only one abuser involved. So instead of removing the Child, remove the abuser, and make the appropriate services available for the abuser to become a productive and positive member of the family. I can not emphasize enough that drugs are a result of some underlying behavior. Drug rehab will not work, unless the underlying problem is resolved.

4. Recommendation 1A:

Agree with the selected recommendation subject to modifications suggested below

Comment: I do like your recommendation to allow more flexibility. Many times parent involvement do not follow political, ie county, state boundaries. Also "sufficient information" is key to this plan even working. Too many times children are removed when there are only False Allegations. It is inherent that the agencies removing a child have

enough Positive Information of Child Abuse, according to the law. And be held accountable, if a child was removed without sufficient information. Finally, I am confused and/or there is insufficient information on why there is a disproportionate number of African-American and Native American children being removed. As written, it sounds like more of a political statement. As we know, the more financially needing a family is the more tension there will be in a family. Perhaps this is the case. I would do more research on why this is, than have a recommendation in such a brief statement.

5. Recommendation 1B:

Agree with the selected recommendation subject to modifications suggested below

Comment: Timely is the key word. All this sounds good, but if anyone involved doesn't take the Time to know the family, all this doesn't matter. Even more money and more employees is not going to make a difference.

6. Recommendation 2

Agree with the selected recommendation subject to modifications suggested below

Comment: In addition, the Foster Parent needs to know about and if possible become involved with the parents. No not that they are just old druggies, but how they plan to become Parents again for their children. If a Foster parent has had training they need to be recognized as Professionals and become involved and not just baby sitters.

7. Recommendation 2A

Agree with the selected recommendation subject to modifications suggested below

Comment: Is this even possible OR again are we asking for more money and/or Judges.

8. Recommendation 2B

Agree with the selected recommendation subject to modifications suggested below

Comment: Again is see loopholes.. "As early as possible" "As soon as possible" How about IMMEDIATELY

9. Recommendation 2C

Agree with the selected recommendation

Comment: Yes

10. Recommendation 2D

Agree with the selected recommendation

11. Recommendation 2E

Agree with the selected recommendation

12. Recommendation 2F

Agree with the selected recommendation

Comment: Holding everyone accountable is a must for all involved. We must remember who are our customers, the Parents and their children.

13. Recommendation 3

Agree with the selected recommendation subject to modifications suggested below

Comment: Sounds good on paper, but will this work. It has been my experience that each agency is it's own domain. And again as long as we have a power struggle as to who thinks who is boss; and who thinks they know best this is not going to work.

14. Recommendation 3A

Agree with the selected recommendation subject to modifications suggested below

Comment: This should include ALL who are involved with the children, such as Foster Parents.

15. Recommendation 3B

Agree with the selected recommendation subject to modifications suggested below

Comment: Here is a suggestion of other types of people of experience that could possible help by offering suggestions: former foster parents, senior citizens, retired police personnel, retired social workers, probation officers, etc

16. Recommendation 3C

Agree with the selected recommendation

17. Recommendation 4

Agree with the selected recommendation

18. Recommendation 4A

Agree with the selected recommendation

19. Recommendation 4B

No Response

20. Recommendation 4C

Agree with the selected recommendation

21. Recommendation 4D

Agree with the selected recommendation subject to modifications suggested below

Comment: Why do we treat Foster Children as second class children???

22. Recommendation 4E

Agree with the selected recommendation

Comment: As a Final Note All Agencies Must be held accountable. Here is a link I would like to offer. Eventhough, it is derived from views of Foster Parents, it is applicable to all parents. It may seem unbelievable, but 80% of Allegations, supposedly Child Abuse have been false when all the information was gathered. All your recommendations will not work, if the boundaries of agencies can not work, and the power struggle continues.. So for your consideration please go to fpreform.org and click on OUR Concerns. And thank you for listening.

[Terms of Use](#) [Privacy Statement](#) [Opt Out/Opt In](#) [Contact Us](#)

Copyright ©1999-2008 SurveyMonkey.com. All Rights Reserved. No portion of this site may be copied without the express written consent of SurveyMonkey.com. 35

Lafrenz, Megan

From: richard gilbert [gilbert_r_m@yahoo.com]
Posted At: Thursday, May 15, 2008 10:13 PM
Conversation: Blue ribbon commission on foster care, Judge Margaret Henry
Posted To: CBRC
Subject: Blue ribbon commission on foster care, Judge Margaret Henry

Hello,

My name is Richard Gilbert, my daughter name is Jade Gilbert. I am writing this to tell you how you can cut the case load in foster care. First do not convict innocent people. Second do not use the fact that someone is leaving the State as an excuse to take someone's child. My daughter was taken because of the lies a social said to cover up his own molestation of my girlfriend little sister. In the petition the male social worker clears says that he asked my girlfriend's little sister to undress to examine bruises on her breast and stomach. Next the court ruled that indeed my girlfriend had stabbed her brother and punched her sister. Yet there is no medical reports or criminal reports to back up such claims. If my girlfriend had really stabbed her brother she would be in jail. She is not in jail because the police found no evidence of any of such acts. However the court ruled that something that did not occur happened. Judge Henry actually said that someone could be stabbed with a knife and have no visible injuries. Next my parental rights were terminated because I have mental issues, but I have not been hospitalized in more than six years and I have the report of two psychiatrist saying that I would make an excellent father. The next issue is that the court acted because me and my family were moving to Michigan. The reason I chose to move is because a house and Michigan cost 50,000 and a house in Los Angeles cost 500,000. I attempted to transfer to a college in Michigan to pursue my Bachelor in Computer Science, but I had to withdraw from my classes because I develop severe ulcers due to the extreme stress this case has generated. If Judge Henry have followed the law and DCFS had merely checked instead of rubber stamping the words of a male social worker who does have a problem with asking eleven year old goes to undress and check for bruises I would have my infant daughter and girlfriend here with me in Michigan. I am asking you to intervene and make sure that Judge Henry follows the law and only places children in foster care that have been abused. Judge Henry convicts everyone that is brought into her courtroom even if there is no evidence.
Please help me to regain custody of my child.

Thank you
Richard Gilbert

Please feel Free to contact me at
(616)475-6801
1433 Giddings
Grand Rapids, Michigan 49507

5/20/2008

survey title:

**Blue Ribbon Commission
Public Comment Form**current report: **Default Report**

Displaying 21 of 102 respondents

Response Type: Normal Response**Collector:** Public Comment Form (Web Link)**Custom Value:** empty**IP Address:** 24.5.9.238**Response Started:** Tue, 3/25/08 8:44:50 PM**Response Modified:** Tue, 3/25/08 9:01:11 PM**1. Please provide the following information.**

Name: - Nancy Goodban

Title: - Owner

Agency/Organization: - Nancy Goodban Consulting

Address: - 319 Iris St

City/Town: - Redwood City

State: - CA

ZIP/Postal Code: - 94062

Country: - USA

Email Address: - nancygoodban@comcast.net

Phone Number: - 650-365-3520

2. Are you commenting on behalf of your organization?

Yes

3. Recommendation 1:

Agree with the selected recommendation

4. Recommendation 1A:

Agree with the selected recommendation subject to modifications suggested below

Comment: You say, "The courts and local partners encourage use of adult drug and mental health courts, as well as other collaborative courts such as dependency drug courts, when appropriate to prevent removal" Because the vast majority of child welfare (and domestic violence) cases have underlying substance abuse problems, please put a stronger focus on the importance of coordination and resources for substance abuse treatment. Also, the timeframe for recovery is more than 6 months, and doesn't match federal requirements. Can you recommend advocating for pilot programs or waivers to support recovering parents involved in reunification services.

5. Recommendation 1B:

Agree with the selected recommendation subject to modifications suggested below

Comment: You say, "The Judicial Council work with state and federal leaders to develop greater flexibility in approving relative placements and to formulate protocols to facilitate swift home assessments and placement with family members when possible" One of the biggest problems for relatives is that they don't meet licensing requirements for number of bedrooms. Please add a recommendation to work with the legislature and Community Care Licensing to allow counties discretion to waive this requirement in the case of relative caregivers who would be best for the child.

6. Recommendation 2

Agree with the selected recommendation

7. Recommendation 2A

Agree with the selected recommendation

8. Recommendation 2B

Agree with the selected recommendation

9. Recommendation 2C

Agree with the selected recommendation subject to modifications suggested below

Comment: You say, "The AOC provide judicial officers and court participants with education and support to create courtroom environments that promote communication with, and participation of, all parties, including children, that takes into account age, development, language, and cultural issues." Can you stress family friendly courts and waiting rooms.

10. Recommendation 2D

Agree with the selected recommendation

11. Recommendation 2E

Agree with the selected recommendation

12. Recommendation 2F

Agree with the selected recommendation

13. Recommendation 3

Agree with the selected recommendation subject to modifications suggested below

Comment: Child maltreatment and domestic violence co-occur. It seems important to specifically note that there should be coordination with domestic violence programs and protocols.

14. Recommendation 3A

Agree with the selected recommendation subject to modifications suggested below

Comment: Also allow Courts access to sections of CWS/CMS as appropriate.

15. Recommendation 3B

Agree with the selected recommendation subject to modifications suggested below

Comment: Add to first bullet "representatives form drug and alcohol, mental health, probation, schools, and domestic violence providers"

16. Recommendation 3C

Agree with the selected recommendation

17. Recommendation 4

Agree with the selected recommendation

18. Recommendation 4A

Agree with the selected recommendation

19. Recommendation 4B

Agree with the selected recommendation

20. Recommendation 4C

Agree with the selected recommendation

21. Recommendation 4D

Agree with the selected recommendation

22. Recommendation 4E

Agree with the selected recommendation subject to modifications suggested below

Comment: Add bullet: "address barriers to service and program coordination including more flexible use of funds at the local level"

[Terms of Use](#) [Privacy Statement](#) [Opt Out/Opt In](#) [Contact Us](#)

Copyright ©1999-2008 SurveyMonkey.com. All Rights Reserved. No portion of this site may be copied without the express written consent of SurveyMonkey.com. 35

survey title:

**Blue Ribbon Commission
Public Comment Form**current report: **Default Report**

Displaying 63 of 102 respondents

Response Type: Normal Response**Collector:** Public Comment Form (Web Link)**Custom Value:** empty**IP Address:** 70.137.152.8**Response Started:** Wed, 5/7/08 11:19:36 AM**Response Modified:** Wed, 5/7/08 12:05:48 PM**1. Please provide the following information.**

Name: - Carole Greeley

Title: - attorney

Agency/Organization: - CADC

Address: - 521 Americano Way

City/Town: - Fairfield

State: - CA

ZIP/Postal Code: - 94533

Country: - US

Email Address: - cgreeley@aol.com

Phone Number: - (707)427-8178

2. Are you commenting on behalf of your organization?

No

3. Recommendation 1:

Agree with the selected recommendation

4. Recommendation 1A:

Agree with the selected recommendation

5. Recommendation 1B:

Agree with the selected recommendation subject to modifications suggested below

Comment: This is too vague. There should be legislation to strengthen the relative preference. Be more specific about how to ensure that foster children who are aging out are able to access available services.**6. Recommendation 2**

Agree with the selected recommendation

7. Recommendation 2A

Agree with the selected recommendation subject to modifications suggested below

Comment: There should be legislation to provide that a referee can hear a dependency case only if the parties have been fully informed of the right to hearing by a judge and have expressly waived that right.

8. Recommendation 2B

Agree with the selected recommendation

9. Recommendation 2C

Agree with the selected recommendation subject to modifications suggested below

Comment: Need a more specific recommendation re the child's right to be present. Need to provide that if reports are not provided on time, the parties have a right to a continuance and error is reversible per se.

10. Recommendation 2D

Agree with the selected recommendation subject to modifications suggested below

Comment: The recently adopted caseload standards are too high. Need to be more specific about how to measure attorney effectiveness and who is responsible for ensuring that attorneys are competent. Not necessary to have this on the bar exam. Should recommend that juvenile courts be open to the public.

11. Recommendation 2E

Agree with the selected recommendation subject to modifications suggested below

Comment: Should clarify when an adversarial proceeding is appropriate.

12. Recommendation 2F

Agree with the selected recommendation

13. Recommendation 3

Agree with the selected recommendation

14. Recommendation 3A

Agree with the selected recommendation

15. Recommendation 3B

Agree with the selected recommendation

16. Recommendation 3C

Agree with the selected recommendation subject to modifications suggested below

Comment: The AOC should work with California Indian legal Services and other experts in Indian law.

17. Recommendation 4

Agree with the selected recommendation

18. Recommendation 4A

Agree with the selected recommendation

19. Recommendation 4B

Agree with the selected recommendation

20. Recommendation 4C

Agree with the selected recommendation

21. Recommendation 4D

Agree with the selected recommendation

22. Recommendation 4E

Agree with the selected recommendation

[Terms of Use](#) [Privacy Statement](#) [Opt Out/Opt In](#) [Contact Us](#)

Copyright ©1999-2008 SurveyMonkey.com. All Rights Reserved. No portion of this site may be copied without the express written consent of SurveyMonkey.com. 35

survey title:

**Blue Ribbon Commission
Public Comment Form**current report: **Default Report**

Displaying 62 of 102 respondents

Response Type: Normal Response**Collector:** Public Comment Form (Web Link)**Custom Value:** empty**IP Address:** 68.123.23.250**Response Started:** Tue, 5/6/08 3:35:14 PM**Response Modified:** Tue, 5/6/08 3:48:19 PM**1. Please provide the following information.**

Name: - James S. Greenan

Title: - Partner

Agency/Organization: - Greenan, Pepper, Sallander & Lally, LLP

Address: - 6111 Bollinger Canyon Road

City/Town: - San Ramon

State: - CA

ZIP/Postal Code: - 94583

Country: - Contra Costa

Email Address: - jgreenan@gpsllp.com

Phone Number: - 925 866 1000

2. Are you commenting on behalf of your organization?

No

3. Recommendation 1:

Agree with the selected recommendation

4. Recommendation 1A:

Agree with the selected recommendation

5. Recommendation 1B:

Agree with the selected recommendation

6. Recommendation 2

Agree with the selected recommendation

7. Recommendation 2A

Agree with the selected recommendation

8. Recommendation 2B

Agree with the selected recommendation

9. Recommendation 2C

Agree with the selected recommendation

10. Recommendation 2D

Agree with the selected recommendation

Agree with the selected recommendation subject to modifications suggested below

Comment: It is my observation that a program is needed to facilitate the education of and participation of experienced lawyers who would be able to willing to have a role in the juvenile dependency process. I am a litigator who has practiced for thirty years and I would be interested in spending some of the remaining years of my career, either as a volunteer or working under court appointment in the juvenile dependency system. However, after I conducting some preliminary research I have found no system that would educate or facilitate lawyers with broad general experience to have a role in the process. I believe that at least some of the current burdens could be removed if there were such a program in place.

11. Recommendation 2E

Agree with the selected recommendation

12. Recommendation 2F

Agree with the selected recommendation

13. Recommendation 3

Agree with the selected recommendation

14. Recommendation 3A

Agree with the selected recommendation

15. Recommendation 3B

Agree with the selected recommendation

16. Recommendation 3C

Agree with the selected recommendation

17. Recommendation 4

Agree with the selected recommendation

18. Recommendation 4A

Agree with the selected recommendation

19. Recommendation 4B

Agree with the selected recommendation

20. Recommendation 4C

Agree with the selected recommendation

21. Recommendation 4D

Agree with the selected recommendation

22. Recommendation 4E

Agree with the selected recommendation

[Terms of Use](#) [Privacy Statement](#) [Opt Out/Opt In](#) [Contact Us](#)

Copyright ©1999-2008 SurveyMonkey.com. All Rights Reserved. No portion of this site may be

survey title:

**Blue Ribbon Commission
Public Comment Form**current report: **Default Report**

Displaying 101 of 102 respondents

Response Type: Normal Response**Collector:** Public Comment Form (Web Link)**Custom Value:** empty**IP Address:** 130.150.114.66**Response Started:** Thu, 5/15/08 2:13:01 PM**Response Modified:** Thu, 5/15/08 2:15:50 PM**1. Please provide the following information.**

Name: - Andrea M. Gunn

Title: - Senior Delegate

Agency/Organization: - Junior Leagues of California State Public Affairs Committee (SPAC)

Address: - 2220 Capitol Avenue

City/Town: - Sacramento

State: - CA

ZIP/Postal Code: - 95816

Country: - U.S.

Email Address: - andigunn@hotmail.com

Phone Number: - 916.548.4611

2. Are you commenting on behalf of your organization?

Yes

3. Recommendation 1:

Agree with the selected recommendation

4. Recommendation 1A:

Agree with the selected recommendation

5. Recommendation 1B:

Agree with the selected recommendation

6. Recommendation 2

No Response

7. Recommendation 2A

No Response

8. Recommendation 2B

No Response

9. Recommendation 2C

No Response

10. Recommendation 2D

No Response

11. Recommendation 2E

No Response

12. Recommendation 2F

No Response

13. Recommendation 3

No Response

14. Recommendation 3A

No Response

15. Recommendation 3B

No Response

16. Recommendation 3C

No Response

17. Recommendation 4

No Response

18. Recommendation 4A

No Response

19. Recommendation 4B

No Response

20. Recommendation 4C

No Response

21. Recommendation 4D

No Response

22. Recommendation 4E

No Response

[Terms of Use](#) [Privacy Statement](#) [Opt Out/Opt In](#) [Contact Us](#)

Copyright ©1999-2008 SurveyMonkey.com. All Rights Reserved. No portion of this site may be copied without the express written consent of SurveyMonkey.com. 35

survey title:

**Blue Ribbon Commission
Public Comment Form**current report: **Default Report**

Displaying 4 of 102 respondents

Response Type: Normal Response**Collector:** Public Comment Form (Web Link)**Custom Value:** empty**IP Address:** 71.146.138.146**Response Started:** Sat, 3/15/08 11:17:42 AM**Response Modified:** Sat, 3/15/08 11:33:36 AM**1. Please provide the following information.**

Name: - Ruth Harrell

Title: - child advocate

Agency/Organization: - CASA

Address: - 777 Finchwood Way

City/Town: - San Jose

State: - CA

ZIP/Postal Code: - 95120

Country: - USA

Email Address: - ruth.harrell@sbcglobal.net

Phone Number: - 408-268-2807

2. Are you commenting on behalf of your organization?

No

3. Recommendation 1:

Agree with the selected recommendation

4. Recommendation 1A:

Agree with the selected recommendation

5. Recommendation 1B:

Agree with the selected recommendation

6. Recommendation 2

Agree with the selected recommendation

7. Recommendation 2A

Agree with the selected recommendation

8. Recommendation 2B

Agree with the selected recommendation

9. Recommendation 2C

Agree with the selected recommendation

10. Recommendation 2D

Agree with the selected recommendation

11. Recommendation 2E

Agree with the selected recommendation

12. Recommendation 2F

Agree with the selected recommendation

13. Recommendation 3

Agree with the selected recommendation

14. Recommendation 3A

Agree with the selected recommendation

15. Recommendation 3B

Agree with the selected recommendation

16. Recommendation 3C

Agree with the selected recommendation

17. Recommendation 4

Agree with the selected recommendation

18. Recommendation 4A

Agree with the selected recommendation

19. Recommendation 4B

Agree with the selected recommendation

20. Recommendation 4C

Agree with the selected recommendation

21. Recommendation 4D

Agree with the selected recommendation

22. Recommendation 4E

Agree with the selected recommendation

[Terms of Use](#) [Privacy Statement](#) [Opt Out/Opt In](#) [Contact Us](#)

Copyright ©1999-2008 SurveyMonkey.com. All Rights Reserved. No portion of this site may be copied without the express written consent of SurveyMonkey.com. 35

survey title:

**Blue Ribbon Commission
Public Comment Form**current report: **Default Report**

Displaying 57 of 102 respondents

Response Type: Normal Response**Collector:** Public Comment Form (Web Link)**Custom Value:** empty**IP Address:** 75.172.157.200**Response Started:** Mon, 4/28/08 6:33:41 AM**Response Modified:** Mon, 4/28/08 7:12:30 AM**1. Please provide the following information.**

Name: - Marilyn Harrison

Title: - National Administrator

Agency/Organization: - Foster Parents Legal Solutions

Address: - P.O. Box 175

City/Town: - Yarnell

State: - AZ

ZIP/Postal Code: - 85362

Country: - U.S.A.

Email Address: - fplegalsolutions@gmail.com

Phone Number: - 877-FPA-CHILD

2. Are you commenting on behalf of your organization?

Yes

3. Recommendation 1:

Do not agree with selected recommendation

Comment: One of the problems is that action is taken prior to making sure that there is a serious problem that cannot be rectified. Then when there is a serious problem nothing is done. There are Fed. Funds available to intervene but those funds are not being properly utilized to intervene. Children are the target for the money they represent to the agency who receive them. SERVICES are no longer being offered at all to the families who need them in leau of the money to the agencies after the children are removed.

4. Recommendation 1A:

Agree with the selected recommendation

Comment: I would agree with these proposed recommendations but any recommendation is only as good as it's enforcement becomes. If any law or recommendation is implemented and then not carried through or enforced it becomes useless to the families it is intended to protect from those who would oppress them and use the very same

as loop holes to steal their children from their arms for the money they represent. California children currently in the foster care system represent 28% that is the highest in the nation. Therefore one must ask the question, are parents in CA. more abusive or is CPS more aggressive in their quest for this newest commodity, this billion dollar industry called America's children.

5. Recommendation 1B:

Agree with the selected recommendation

Comment: But here again these things are just not being done. They do not look for relative placements, and the services that are demanded by the foster parents are met with negative responses and retaliation by the agencies. Because it all stems from the "root of all evil" money. The services come from the pocket of the beast that The Mondale Act of 1974 has created, CPS. They protect our children right into oblivion. Then turn them on the streets when the money is gone at 18, unless of course they are special needs....which means more money and medication too. It is a vicious circle. All revolving around money not our children.

6. Recommendation 2

Agree with the selected recommendation

Comment: The courts are kept in the dark alot of times in conjunction with the child who is in fact "a Ward of the Court". The judge must depend on the Social worker who barely knows the child at all...if the court would rely more on the 24/7 caretaker for information on the children in question the truth would be known. As the Adoption and Safe Families Act passed by Congress in 1997 intended for foster parents to be able to speak up on behalf of our children who many times cannot speak for themselves in court proceedings. But Foster parents are not being informed of this right, why? Good question.

7. Recommendation 2A

Agree with the selected recommendation

8. Recommendation 2B

Agree with the selected recommendation

Comment: Barriers like uninformed foster parents who are told to go back to their corners and keep quiet by their social workers. Our job at FPLS is to educate foster parents, to equip them to not only speak up on behalf of their children but for themselves. To know their rights and be aware of their state statutes codes and their agencies rules and regulations.

9. Recommendation 2C

Agree with the selected recommendation

Comment: Again in theory this is a great proposal. But in reality it will never take place. Social workers will not work with foster parents. They want them to be totally ignorant of court procedures, they do want them present to counter what is being told the judge...I don't want to say that all of them lie that would not be a fair statement. Let's just say that if the judge needs the balance of the pieces of the puzzle in front of him/her to make a decision based on ALL the pieces so he/she has the entire picture of this little life represented in front of him/her they need to ask the only person who knows these facts, THE FOSTER PARENTS.

10. Recommendation 2D

Agree with the selected recommendation

11. Recommendation 2E

Agree with the selected recommendation

12. Recommendation 2F

No Response

13. Recommendation 3

No Response

14. Recommendation 3A

No Response

15. Recommendation 3B

No Response

16. Recommendation 3C

No Response

17. Recommendation 4

No Response

18. Recommendation 4A

No Response

19. Recommendation 4B

No Response

20. Recommendation 4C

No Response

21. Recommendation 4D

No Response

22. Recommendation 4E

No Response

[Terms of Use](#) [Privacy Statement](#) [Opt Out/Opt In](#) [Contact Us](#)

Copyright ©1999-2008 SurveyMonkey.com. All Rights Reserved. No portion of this site may be copied without the express written consent of SurveyMonkey.com. 35

survey title:

**Blue Ribbon Commission
Public Comment Form**current report: **Default Report**

Displaying 73 of 102 respondents

Response Type: Normal Response**Collector:** Public Comment Form (Web Link)**Custom Value:** empty**IP Address:** 206.169.45.183**Response Started:** Fri, 5/9/08 3:15:23 PM**Response Modified:** Fri, 5/9/08 3:58:44 PM**1. Please provide the following information.**

Name: - Monique Hawkins

Title: - Program Director - Court Services

Agency/Organization: - Kern County Dept. of Human Services

Address: - 100 E. California Ave.

City/Town: - Bakersfield

State: - CA

ZIP/Postal Code: - 93302

Country: - USA

Email Address: - hawkinm@co.kern.ca.us

Phone Number: - 661-631-6463

2. Are you commenting on behalf of your organization?

No

3. Recommendation 1:

Agree with the selected recommendation

4. Recommendation 1A:

Agree with the selected recommendation subject to modifications suggested below

Comment: Many studies have been conducted to address the issues of disproportionality - rather than initiating another study, it seems more feasible if courts and partnering agencies take the findings from current research and strive to improve their respective systems of operation specifically, focusing on best practices.

5. Recommendation 1B:

Agree with the selected recommendation subject to modifications suggested below

Comment: There is clearly a need for additional and improved transitional services. Legislation needs to enjoin

services from Aging & Adult, Mental Health, Regional Center and Housing Authority with services offered through child welfare. Transitioning this population of children from various children's system of care to those focused on adult services is plagued with many burecratic obstacles.

6. Recommendation 2

Agree with the selected recommendation

7. Recommendation 2A

Agree with the selected recommendation

8. Recommendation 2B

Agree with the selected recommendation

9. Recommendation 2C

Agree with the selected recommendation

10. Recommendation 2D

Agree with the selected recommendation

11. Recommendation 2E

Agree with the selected recommendation

12. Recommendation 2F

Agree with the selected recommendation

13. Recommendation 3

Agree with the selected recommendation

14. Recommendation 3A

Agree with the selected recommendation

15. Recommendation 3B

Agree with the selected recommendation

16. Recommendation 3C

Agree with the selected recommendation

17. Recommendation 4

Agree with the selected recommendation

18. Recommendation 4A

Agree with the selected recommendation

19. Recommendation 4B

Agree with the selected recommendation

20. Recommendation 4C

Agree with the selected recommendation

21. Recommendation 4D

Agree with the selected recommendation

22. Recommendation 4E

Agree with the selected recommendation

[Terms of Use](#) [Privacy Statement](#) [Opt Out/Opt In](#) [Contact Us](#)

Copyright ©1999-2008 SurveyMonkey.com. All Rights Reserved. No portion of this site may be copied without the express written consent of SurveyMonkey.com. 35

survey title:

**Blue Ribbon Commission
Public Comment Form**current report: **Default Report**

Displaying 70 of 102 respondents

Response Type: Normal Response**Collector:** Public Comment Form (Web Link)**Custom Value:** empty**IP Address:** 207.62.13.66**Response Started:** Fri, 5/9/08 11:25:12 AM**Response Modified:** Fri, 5/9/08 12:08:25 PM**1. Please provide the following information.**

Name: - Haislip Winston Hayes II

Title: - Minor's Counsel

Agency/Organization: - Imperial County Public Defender

Address: - 939 Main

City/Town: - El Centro

State: - CA

ZIP/Postal Code: - 92243

Country: - USA

Email Address: - haisliphayes@imperialcounty.net

Phone Number: - 760-482-4510

2. Are you commenting on behalf of your organization?

No

3. Recommendation 1:

Agree with the selected recommendation

4. Recommendation 1A:

Agree with the selected recommendation subject to modifications suggested below

Comment: Given the prevalence of drug abuse statewide, mandatory establishment of drug dependency courts**5. Recommendation 1B:**

Agree with the selected recommendation subject to modifications suggested below

Comment: Specialization of Social Workers to handle 14-21 year olds to aid transition to adult life.

6. Recommendation 2

Agree with the selected recommendation

7. Recommendation 2A

Agree with the selected recommendation

8. Recommendation 2B

Agree with the selected recommendation subject to modifications suggested below

Comment: State law mandates that children over ten are noticed for all hearings, non compliance unacceptable, and transportation must be made available.

9. Recommendation 2C

Agree with the selected recommendation

10. Recommendation 2D

Agree with the selected recommendation

11. Recommendation 2E

Agree with the selected recommendation

12. Recommendation 2F

Agree with the selected recommendation

13. Recommendation 3

Agree with the selected recommendation

14. Recommendation 3A

Agree with the selected recommendation

15. Recommendation 3B

Agree with the selected recommendation

16. Recommendation 3C

Agree with the selected recommendation

17. Recommendation 4

Agree with the selected recommendation

18. Recommendation 4A

Agree with the selected recommendation

19. Recommendation 4B

Agree with the selected recommendation

20. Recommendation 4C

Agree with the selected recommendation

21. Recommendation 4D

Agree with the selected recommendation

22. Recommendation 4E

Agree with the selected recommendation

[Terms of Use](#) [Privacy Statement](#) [Opt Out/Opt In](#) [Contact Us](#)

Copyright ©1999-2008 SurveyMonkey.com. All Rights Reserved. No portion of this site may be copied without the express written consent of SurveyMonkey.com. 35



Honoring Emancipated Youth's Comments on the Blue Ribbon Commission Draft Recommendations,
for the Open Comment Period, March 15th, 2008 – May 13th, 2008

- Generally, HEY supports the recommendations proposed by the BRC and agrees that the courts play an essential role in the ultimate fate of foster children: their family reunification, their placements, and their eventual emancipation. Therefore, HEY supports the basic guiding principles behind the BR Report in advocating for improved practice in the court procedures and hearings through appropriate and timely reviews, increased focus on making the court more accessible to families and children, collaboration between the courts and other agencies and departments, and allocation of more resources and funding to fulfill these recommendations.
- HEY is generally concerned with how many of these activities will be developed, managed and implemented. Therefore, while HEY agrees with many of the recommendations for the courts, the unanswered problem concerns the daily tasks required to complete any of these recommendations.
- Currently, there may be no staff person or department within the Judicial Council that is assigned to the responsibilities required to implement many recommendations, such as developing protocols for improved focus on the families and children, and increased time in the hearing for all parties to provide input, fulfilling performance standards, or liaising between schools, employment services, housing programs, other courts or other types of service organizations.
- HEY is also aware that developing studies and implementing performance measures, such as those recommended in 1A (disproportionality studies), 2A (caseload studies), 2F (court performance measures for safety, permanency, timeliness, etc) and others, require highly trained researchers and project managers who have the workload and training capacity.
- Other general concerns for implementation: for example, who will work with the agencies to help them coordinate funding and program requirements? Which staff person or department will be dedicated to manage data collection and analysis? How will the specifics and details of completing each of these tasks be managed? Who will hire, train and manage the staff required for these recommendations to take place? These are the types of questions – concerned with how these recommendations will be accomplished - that HEY recommends should be posed to the BRC.
- Referring to Recommendation # 3, HEY strongly believes that while collaboration between the courts and partnering agencies is essential and necessary, it should not be the role of the courts to lead this collaborative effort, or call and facilitate the 'multi-disciplinary commissions' such as recommended in 3B, but rather the duty of a neutral, third party.
- As an intermediary, HEY is aware that collaboration is a constant struggle, and requires dedicated, resourced individuals who can manage and maintain the network. Intermediaries and other collaborations and coalitions are responsible for convening partners, identifying and engaging leaders, building and sustaining common visions among key stakeholders, building public support and awareness, promoting long-term commitment to collaboration, developing and using data to support claims and conducting regular evaluations of systems as a whole. In short, intermediaries and others like them exist to collaborate, and facilitate those practices

recommended in Recommendation #3. Therefore, HEY proposes that commissions focusing on a larger network with many players represented should be managed and facilitated by a local intermediary who can play a neutral, yet informed role in administering these commissions.

- In the Bay Area, San Francisco, Alameda, and Santa Clara counties have organizations that are already doing collaborative work within their foster care systems. It would be duplicative if the courts (who are not experts in collaboration, but in their own judicial field) attempted to also convene agencies. Also, if led by the courts, the 'multi-disciplinary commissions' would unintentionally or not, be focused on court concerns, rather than a global view of the whole system, and the courts role within it. Therefore, large-scale systems collaborations and network assessments should be the role of an intermediary, if they exist within a county, or a neutral third party, such as a meeting facilitator, community convener or non-profit consultant.

survey title:

**Blue Ribbon Commission
Public Comment Form**current report: **Default Report**

Displaying 48 of 102 respondents

Response Type: Normal Response**Collector:** Public Comment Form (Web Link)**Custom Value:** empty**IP Address:** 216.93.204.172**Response Started:** Tue, 4/22/08 5:20:09 PM**Response Modified:** Tue, 4/22/08 6:02:04 PM**1. Please provide the following information.**

Name: - Christi Howarth

Title: - parent/teacher 25 years

Agency/Organization: - public

Address: - PO Box 823

City/Town: - Roseville

State: - CA

ZIP/Postal Code: - 95661

Country: - USA

Email Address: - salzberg1ver@aol.com

Phone Number: - 310 991 7770

2. Are you commenting on behalf of your organization?

No

3. Recommendation 1:

Agree with the selected recommendation subject to modifications suggested below

Comment: The key is "necessary services"...I have seen parents jump through hoops to do every "needed service" like counseling to no avail...they still do not get their children back. The key is to hire people who are ethical at all levels, and provide services that truly are needed and not just games to get parents in "gotcha" situation.

4. Recommendation 1A:

Agree with the selected recommendation subject to modifications suggested below

Comment: This sounds good and I see the goal posted in offices stating the goal is to prevent removal, however, I still see abuse over and over again in the name of state revenue for adopting children. Take the money factor OUT of the equation!

5. Recommendation 1B:

Do not agree with selected recommendation

Comment: DO NOT AGREE with the age to 21! Again the other parts of this proposal SOUND great in theory but this is only good as can be enforced by ETHICAL individuals who are not getting bonuses for putting children into the foster care/adoption system.

6. Recommendation 2

Agree with the selected recommendation subject to modifications suggested below

Comment: The treated fairly needs to be fleshed out...what does that mean exactly? What does it mean to make children a priority? Needs to be specific so it is carried out the same way statewide.

7. Recommendation 2A

Agree with the selected recommendation

Comment: How can one evaluate one's commitment and leadership role? Need specific standards for evaluation.

8. Recommendation 2B

Agree with the selected recommendation subject to modifications suggested below

Comment: This includes allowing parent documentation to be added to the record! This includes allowing parents to pick the lawyer they wish and the lawyer they wish for their child!

9. Recommendation 2C

Agree with the selected recommendation subject to modifications suggested below

Comment: Parents must not be coerced into signing documents they do not understand. All implications of the signature must be clearly outlined. Parents need to take the stand and be able to get their side of the story ON THE RECORD

10. Recommendation 2D

Agree with the selected recommendation subject to modifications suggested below

Comment: Court appointed attorneys must not be coerced to side with the court when they disagree with court "findings"

11. Recommendation 2E

Agree with the selected recommendation subject to modifications suggested below

Comment: Still believe that the reunification as soon as possible is only going to happen when the money incentive given to states for adoption is OFF the table.

12. Recommendation 2F

Agree with the selected recommendation subject to modifications suggested below

Comment: Parents need a way to report due process violations and falsification of documentation to an accountability agency like the GAO in the US government.

13. Recommendation 3

Agree with the selected recommendation subject to modifications suggested below

Comment: Prioritize the needs of the children needs to be fleshed out so all counties in the state know exactly what that means/looks like

14. Recommendation 3A

Agree with the selected recommendation subject to modifications suggested below

Comment: One can have access regarding cases in other courts but can NOT be biased to use cases to shut up parents in other courts with valid cases like pending workers comp. cases, etc. That MUST be stated.

15. Recommendation 3B

Agree with the selected recommendation subject to modifications suggested below

Comment: Do not deny parents to put their educational options on the record.

16. Recommendation 3C

No Response

17. Recommendation 4

Do not agree with selected recommendation

Comment: Why can't the court work with agencies to provide funding to the parents to support their own children, rather than give funds to a foster parent?

18. Recommendation 4A

No Response

19. Recommendation 4B

Agree with the selected recommendation subject to modifications suggested below

20. Recommendation 4C

Agree with the selected recommendation subject to modifications suggested below

Comment: Again, why can't the courts work with organizations to provide these opportunities to the parent instead of a foster parent?

21. Recommendation 4D

Agree with the selected recommendation subject to modifications suggested below

Do not agree with selected recommendation

Comment: I belive all these wonderful experiences and programs should be given to the natural parent first to assist them prior to gifting all these funds to the foster parent

22. Recommendation 4E

Agree with the selected recommendation subject to modifications suggested below

Comment: Bonuses when the state demonstrated reunification with the natural birth parent with all the wonderful services outlined above for the designated to the foster parent. MUST PROVE REUNIFICATION IS REALLY A PRIORITY

[Terms of Use](#) [Privacy Statement](#) [Opt Out/Opt In](#) [Contact Us](#)

Copyright ©1999-2008 SurveyMonkey.com. All Rights Reserved. No portion of this site may be copied without the express written consent of SurveyMonkey.com. 35

survey title:

**Blue Ribbon Commission
Public Comment Form**

current report: **Default Report**

Displaying 76 of 102 respondents

Response Type: Normal Response

Collector: Public Comment Form (Web Link)

Custom Value: empty

IP Address: 207.200.116.74

Response Started: Fri, 5/9/08 9:18:32 PM

Response Modified: Fri, 5/9/08 9:40:56 PM

1. Please provide the following information.

Name: - Jennifer

Title: - MSW

Agency/Organization: - DHHS

Address: - Sacramento

City/Town: - Sacramento

State: - CA

ZIP/Postal Code: - 95838

Country: - US

2. Are you commenting on behalf of your organization?

No

3. Recommendation 1:

Agree with the selected recommendation subject to modifications suggested below

Comment: As you will hear many times, the key is more social workers. CWS is understaffed and without SW none of your plans will work.

4. Recommendation 1A:

Agree with the selected recommendation subject to modifications suggested below

Comment: 30+ page reports are already being submitted to Court and Counsel, if the time was taken to read the reports, I think the info is within. Research as to why there is a disproportionate # of AA and NA children is needed.

5. Recommendation 1B:

Agree with the selected recommendation subject to modifications suggested below

Comment: Work can only be provided as quickly as Staffing allows. When Emergency Response SW have 45 cases and Family Reunification SW have 40 cases and Pemanent Placement SW have 72 cases it's not possible.

6. Recommendation 2

Agree with the selected recommendation

7. Recommendation 2A

Agree with the selected recommendation

8. Recommendation 2B

Agree with the selected recommendation subject to modifications suggested below

Comment: As long as DHHS has enough staff.

9. Recommendation 2C

Agree with the selected recommendation

Comment: Absolutely kids miss too much school going to hearings and SW's sit in Court for 4-5 hours for one 15 minute hearing.

10. Recommendation 2D

Agree with the selected recommendation subject to modifications suggested below

Comment: When I have my \$48,000 of Student loans forgiven for giving my career to CWS.

11. Recommendation 2E

Agree with the selected recommendation subject to modifications suggested below

Comment: Team Decision Making meetings do not belong in the Court. It is a Casey Foundation principal that is not suppose to involve the Court.

12. Recommendation 2F

Agree with the selected recommendation

13. Recommendation 3

Agree with the selected recommendation subject to modifications suggested below

Comment: It would also help to include line workers because they really know what is going on and how to better serve the families and children.

14. Recommendation 3A

Agree with the selected recommendation

Comment: If this would replace JAS and everyone would have access that would be great.

15. Recommendation 3B

Agree with the selected recommendation subject to modifications suggested below

Comment: Once again, include line workers (SW).

16. Recommendation 3C

Agree with the selected recommendation

17. Recommendation 4

Agree with the selected recommendation

18. Recommendation 4A

Agree with the selected recommendation

19. Recommendation 4B

Agree with the selected recommendation

20. Recommendation 4C

Agree with the selected recommendation

Comment: Absolutely, our kids miss out!!!

21. Recommendation 4D

No Response

22. Recommendation 4E

Agree with the selected recommendation subject to modifications suggested below

Comment: Hire more Social Workers.

[Terms of Use](#) [Privacy Statement](#) [Opt Out/Opt In](#) [Contact Us](#)

Copyright ©1999-2008 SurveyMonkey.com. All Rights Reserved. No portion of this site may be copied without the express written consent of SurveyMonkey.com. 35

survey title:

**Blue Ribbon Commission
Public Comment Form**current report: **Default Report**

Displaying 49 of 102 respondents

Response Type: Normal Response**Collector:** Public Comment Form (Web Link)**Custom Value:** empty**IP Address:** 75.215.111.219**Response Started:** Tue, 4/22/08 5:16:47 PM**Response Modified:** Tue, 4/22/08 6:56:04 PM**1. Please provide the following information.**

Name: - Randy Johnson

Title: - Mr.

Agency/Organization: - None

Address: - 1729 Kenwell St

City/Town: - San Diego

State: - CA

ZIP/Postal Code: - 92139

Country: - USA

Email Address: - sojourner96@yahoo.com

Phone Number: - 619-565-8306

2. Are you commenting on behalf of your organization?

No

3. Recommendation 1:

Agree with the selected recommendation

4. Recommendation 1A:

Agree with the selected recommendation

5. Recommendation 1B:

Agree with the selected recommendation

6. Recommendation 2

Agree with the selected recommendation

7. Recommendation 2A

Agree with the selected recommendation

8. Recommendation 2B

Agree with the selected recommendation

9. Recommendation 2C

Agree with the selected recommendation

10. Recommendation 2D

Agree with the selected recommendation

11. Recommendation 2E

Agree with the selected recommendation

12. Recommendation 2F

Agree with the selected recommendation

13. Recommendation 3

Agree with the selected recommendation

14. Recommendation 3A

Agree with the selected recommendation

15. Recommendation 3B

Agree with the selected recommendation

16. Recommendation 3C

Agree with the selected recommendation

17. Recommendation 4

Agree with the selected recommendation

18. Recommendation 4A

Agree with the selected recommendation

19. Recommendation 4B

Agree with the selected recommendation

20. Recommendation 4C

Agree with the selected recommendation

21. Recommendation 4D

Agree with the selected recommendation

22. Recommendation 4E

Agree with the selected recommendation

[Terms of Use](#) [Privacy Statement](#) [Opt Out/Opt In](#) [Contact Us](#)

Copyright ©1999-2008 SurveyMonkey.com. All Rights Reserved. No portion of this site may be copied without the express written consent of SurveyMonkey.com. 35

survey title:

**Blue Ribbon Commission
Public Comment Form**current report: **Default Report**

Displaying 79 of 101 respondents

Response Type: Normal Response**Collector:** Public Comment Form (Web Link)**Custom Value:** empty**IP Address:** 71.254.147.82**Response Started:** Sun, 5/11/08 9:15:20 PM**Response Modified:** Sun, 5/11/08 9:28:37 PM**1. Please provide the following information.**

Name: - karen

Title: - sordiff

Agency/Organization: - CAFRA, UFRA, AFRA

Address: - 526 esther way

City/Town: - redlands

State: - CA

ZIP/Postal Code: - 92373

Country: - United States

Email Address: - karensordiff39@yahoo.com

Phone Number: - 909-792-9114

2. Are you commenting on behalf of your organization?

Yes

No

3. Recommendation 1:

Agree with the selected recommendation

Agree with the selected recommendation subject to modifications suggested below

Comment: i FEEL THAT ALL CASES SHOULD BE REVISITED, THERE ARE ALOT OF PEOPLE THAT LAST THEIR CHILDREN WRONGLY, I LOST MY GRANDBABIES BASED ON A LIE AND THEY WOULDNT ACCEPT MY EVIDENCE, PLEASE HAVE ALL CASES REVISITED AND RETURN CHILDREN THAT NEEDS TO BE HOME.

4. Recommendation 1A:

Agree with the selected recommendation

5. Recommendation 1B:

Agree with the selected recommendation

6. Recommendation 2

Agree with the selected recommendation

7. Recommendation 2A

Agree with the selected recommendation

8. Recommendation 2B

Agree with the selected recommendation

9. Recommendation 2C

Agree with the selected recommendation

10. Recommendation 2D

Agree with the selected recommendation

11. Recommendation 2E

Agree with the selected recommendation

12. Recommendation 2F

Agree with the selected recommendation

13. Recommendation 3

Agree with the selected recommendation

14. Recommendation 3A

Agree with the selected recommendation

15. Recommendation 3B

Agree with the selected recommendation

16. Recommendation 3C

Agree with the selected recommendation

17. Recommendation 4

Agree with the selected recommendation

18. Recommendation 4A

Agree with the selected recommendation

19. Recommendation 4B

Agree with the selected recommendation

20. Recommendation 4C

Agree with the selected recommendation

21. Recommendation 4D

Agree with the selected recommendation

22. Recommendation 4E

Agree with the selected recommendation

[Terms of Use](#) [Privacy Statement](#) [Opt Out/Opt In](#) [Contact Us](#)

Copyright ©1999-2008 SurveyMonkey.com. All Rights Reserved. No portion of this site may be copied without the express written consent of SurveyMonkey.com. 35

survey title:

**Blue Ribbon Commission
Public Comment Form**current report: **Default Report**

Displaying 46 of 102 respondents

Response Type: Normal Response**Collector:** Public Comment Form (Web Link)**Custom Value:** empty**IP Address:** 64.136.27.228**Response Started:** Tue, 4/22/08 3:47:56 PM**Response Modified:** Tue, 4/22/08 4:29:25 PM**1. Please provide the following information.**

Name: - Dorothy Knightly

Title: - Grandmother & Family rights activist

Agency/Organization: - CPS Awareness

Address: - 10 Demanche St.

City/Town: - Nashua

State: - NH

ZIP/Postal Code: - 03060

Country: - U.S.

Email Address: - dottedlady1@netzero.net

Phone Number: - 603-886-2767

2. Are you commenting on behalf of your organization?

No

3. Recommendation 1:

Agree with the selected recommendation

4. Recommendation 1A:

Agree with the selected recommendation subject to modifications suggested below

Comment: If biological families received the services needed, foster care would be unwarranted. Foster caregiver's are given the services that the parent should have been given to keep the child in the home, but was never offered.**5. Recommendation 1B:**

Agree with the selected recommendation subject to modifications suggested below

Comment: One year to reunify is not enough time in some case's. It need's to be extended.

6. Recommendation 2

Agree with the selected recommendation

7. Recommendation 2A

Agree with the selected recommendation subject to modifications suggested below

Comment: The same Judge should always be on the same case, not a different one for each review. Also, criminal Judges should not be allowed.

8. Recommendation 2B

Agree with the selected recommendation

9. Recommendation 2C

Agree with the selected recommendation subject to modifications suggested below

Comment: Children should be allowed as well as the Public. We need open court's which will stop some of the trickery by caseworker's and their Lawyer's. We also need jury trial's. A Judge who always sides with CPS is unfair.

10. Recommendation 2D

Agree with the selected recommendation subject to modifications suggested below

Comment: GAL's instead of CASA. Court-appointed Lawyer's who specialize in child custody, not real estate or worker's comp Lawyer's.

11. Recommendation 2E

Agree with the selected recommendation

12. Recommendation 2F

Agree with the selected recommendation

13. Recommendation 3

Do not agree with selected recommendation

14. Recommendation 3A

Do not agree with selected recommendation

15. Recommendation 3B

Agree with the selected recommendation

16. Recommendation 3C

Agree with the selected recommendation

17. Recommendation 4

Agree with the selected recommendation subject to modifications suggested below

Comment: Priority should be given to the families before foster care placement.

18. Recommendation 4A

Agree with the selected recommendation

19. Recommendation 4B

No Response

20. Recommendation 4C

Do not agree with selected recommendation

Comment: Families should have access to prevent fostercare placement.

21. Recommendation 4D

Agree with the selected recommendation

22. Recommendation 4E

Agree with the selected recommendation subject to modifications suggested below

Comment: No incentive money should be given until the caseworker helps the family. For each family kept together, give incentive money or bonuses. No Federal Adoption Assistance.

[Terms of Use](#) [Privacy Statement](#) [Opt Out/Opt In](#) [Contact Us](#)

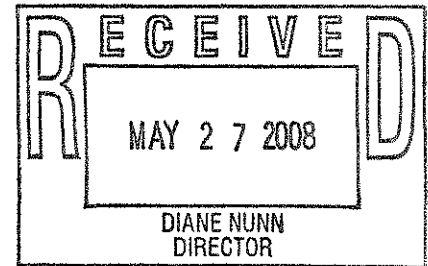
Copyright ©1999-2008 SurveyMonkey.com. All Rights Reserved. No portion of this site may be copied without the express written consent of SurveyMonkey.com. 35

Wendy Kontos

711 N. Voluntario St. Santa Barbara, CA 93103 (805) 722-7060

May 23, 2008

Supreme Court Justice Carlos R. Moreno
Chair, Blue Ribbon Commission on Children in Foster Care
312 North Spring Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012



Re: My experience with the Los Angeles County Dependency Court System

Dear Justice Carlos R. Moreno,

I recently finished my third year of study at the Santa Barbara College of Law. I felt empowered and inspired by my constitutional law class taught by Santa Barbara Superior Court Judge, the Honorable Brian Hill. That course gave me hope that one person has the ability to make things right and help justice prevail. Unfortunately, much of my hope and inspiration has been frustrated due to the reality that our justice system is broken; specifically, the system has failed my family.

In December 2007, my family became entangled with the Los Angeles Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) and the Los Angeles County Dependency Court in Monterey Park. My sister, mother of two, was accused of neglect. I'm not asking you to analyze the facts of her case. I'm merely hoping that you would take a few minutes to read our story and put it into the context of why both DCFS the dependency court system need serious overhaul. As the Chair of the Blue Ribbon Commission on Children in Foster Care, I understand you are aware that problems and abuse within the system exist.

Per the minutes published from the Blue Ribbon Commission on March 22-23, 2007 Meeting in Sacramento, it was noted,

“Justice Moreno further reiterated the commission’s objectives, stating that we look to achieve politically viable recommendations for improving court performance and accountability, seek improved collaboration by pointing out that the courts do not operate in isolation...”

These objectives are well put and their fulfillment much needed. Two words specifically stand out for me: “accountability” and “isolation.” The beauty of our justice system is that it is open to the public, and in many cases, there is entitlement to a jury trial. These things allow for accountability of the courts and avoid isolation. They also keep the system balanced and in check because decisions are often made under the scrutiny of the public and media. The dependency system, on the other hand, is shrouded in a veil of secrecy. It is a dark niche of our justice system that the public knows little about and allows for no media coverage. I believe this creates a sense of isolation by all parties, especially families and encourages a lack of accountability on the referees, judges, prosecutorial agencies and attorneys. This gives rise to systematic abuse. I understand its confidential nature is to protect our children; however in many cases, the children are not present in the courtroom. In the least, parents should be given the choice whether to have it open to the public and media. Additionally, there are many civil and criminal cases involving children that are not under dependency court jurisdiction—these cases continue to be open to the public and allow for media coverage. In those situations the children remain unidentified and protected by the news media.

It is my understanding that the Commission will meet in June 2008 to develop a final set of recommendations for submission to the Judicial Council in August 2008. Unfortunately for my family, those recommendations or any changes arising out of them would come too late. But I hope, that our story, and others like it, will shed light on the problems and abuse; and the resulting changes will rid the system of the substandard dependency proceedings we experienced.

Just briefly, here is our story:

My sister and her husband attended a dream seminar at a local church. Following the seminar, the reverend from the church approached my sister and invited her to coffee. During coffee, my sister mentioned a dream she had about killing her friend’s grandmother, which she felt appropriate having just attended the church’s dream seminar. She also mentioned that her two-year old was going through the “terrible twos” and related a recent incident where her daughter got into some over-the-counter children’s cold-medicine. My sister had brought her daughter to the emergency room, where doctors monitored her for a few hours, determined she was fine and then sent them home. The reverend mistook their conversation as a confession of murder and reported my sister to DCFS.

DCFS entered my sister's home two days later at 9:30 in the evening. They spent four hours questioning her and her husband about a murder that didn't exist and the cold-medication incident. DCFS then woke both children and strip-searched them, despite their policy of no strip-searching unless there is a physical abuse allegation. They threatened to take both children into foster-care that night, and threatened criminal charges against her and her husband. My sister contacted her ex-husband (father to her eldest child) and asked he come to the home to help them. He arrived and was informed he was not allowed to leave with his son (by which he shares custody). Rather, he must stay in the home to monitor the current husband, my sister must leave the home, or the children will be taken to foster care.

My sister has no criminal record, no history of abuse and the children (ages two and eight) have never had mental, emotional or physical issues—they are healthy well-rounded children. The reverend that reported my sister had only met her on two brief occasions and had never met the children. Despite this, DCFS claimed the children dependents of the court and went beyond their own jurisdiction to actually investigate a “murder” which was completely ridiculous and unfounded.

I am horrified and bewildered, especially having just studied the fundamental rights of parents interpreted through the Fourteenth Amendment of our Constitution. How can the law allow this to happen? How can these people do this to my family? What happened to due process? The only “notice” my sister received was a carbon-copy “voluntary agreement” that was left by DCFS that night, which stated an inexplicable “general neglect” and that my sister must remain out of the home for 30 days and that both the ex-husband and current husband to remain in the home for the same. The “voluntary” element of the agreement meant if they didn't sign it, the children would be taken away that night. How is this voluntary? How is this the appropriate due process for a fundamental right? Additionally, they received no notice of any hearing until after they made several phone calls to various agencies. A call was finally returned the night before the hearing. They were not informed of any right to counsel. They received no information on where to go or what to expect or why this happened.

The situation worsened within the dependency court system. Our experience at the Edmund D. Edelman Children's Court in Monterey Park was horrible and sadly reflective of the dependency court reported on by Karen De Sa in her Mercury News story entitled, “Broken Families, Broken Courts: A Mercury New Investigation,” published in February 2008. Ms. De Sa stated in her article: “The case was presented as - OK, you're basically guilty because CPS

(Child Protective Services) said you are, so let's just try to make it as less
y was treated. The only witness
DCFS provided was the reverend who had no medical or psychological
professional background, merely her own vivid imagination—yet this was
enough for DCFS to pursue the case. Furthermore and most alarmingly, the
day my sister requested a trial, she received a phone call from a DCFS
supervisor that same night, warning her that if she goes to trial, “the gloves are
coming off” and “DCFS owns the court”.

Considering our experience, I wonder if that statement is true.

On many occasions, we would be forced to wait six or seven hours at the court
(alongside hundreds of other families) for a “hearing” that would last a mere six
minutes. When my sister requested a trial, she was only allowed a maximum of
two hours despite a laundry list of expert and lay witnesses that she had put
together including numerous friends, neighbors, family members,
psychologists, doctors, day-care providers and elementary school teachers to
disprove the ridiculous allegation against her. Later, we would learn that the
two hours of trial we were designated, would be stretched out into 5-20 minute
increments over a four and a half week period. As a result of that and due to
dependency court procedures, including massive caseloads and serious
constraints on time, however, she was unable to bring more than two
witnesses. At one point, she and her husband were told by one of the attorneys
to just submit to whatever DCFS wants and to stop acting like “cowboys”.
Additionally, when we would go into the courtroom, the referee presiding over
the case was disrespectful and appeared irritated by the fact that we were taking
up her time.

Finally, during my sister's disposition, we kept asking, what had she done
wrong? What evidence is there to show her inability to care for her children?
The allegation regarding the medication was dropped, yet DCFS continued to
pursue its case against her. Ultimately, the closest answer we got as to what she
had done wrong was: *because she is being treated for attention deficit disorder there might
be something we don't know about yet regarding her mental state which may pose a future
risk to her children.* This implies that any parent with the commonly treated
ADHD is at risk for losing custody of their children. My sister's entire case and
conviction arose out of this, along with a single conversation about a dream
with the reverend. There was no evidence of neglect or abuse of her children.

Since when does our justice system allow punishment without a crime?

To this day, my sister is forced to sleep outside of her home and is only entitled to monitored visits. It began in December and will continue through November. Almost an entire year will be spent on fighting an allegation DCFS has yet to prove. An entire year where her two children cannot spend nights with the comfort of knowing that their mother is in the next room.

I find it appalling that this is how the law is applied to fundamental parental rights. The reality of what my family has gone through and the research I have since done, just shows how much need for change there is.

Another portion of the Commission minutes from March 2007 notes:

“...[T]he system should not bring in more families or children than it can serve because the courts’ ability to provide fairness and due process would be severely lessened. We may end up doing more harm than good, so the court would ultimately lose public respect and authority.”

This statement falls short of the reality that the system is not and has never been in the public eye. If it were, it would already have lost respect due to its substandard application of “justice” and “due process.” Inexperienced, over-worked *referees* are making decisions that infringe upon one of our few and precious fundamental rights under the Constitution. Attorneys with no training are failing to represent parents and children, causing severe detriment to their lives. As a result, families like mine are being torn apart. This is all while abused children and parents in need are ignored as the system continues to be over-burdened, under-funded and closed off from the public.

DCFS wrongfully brought my sister into this broken system. And due to the system’s problems with lack of due process, fairness and time she and her children remain trapped within it. I witnessed egregious behavior on the part of DCFS, which continued throughout the dependency proceedings. I also saw over-worked and inexperienced attorneys juggling hundreds of cases they couldn’t or wouldn’t take the time to understand or argue adversarily. I watched as the referee presiding over our case rolled her eyes and sprawled herself out across her bench during our witness’ testimony.

Per the minutes from the Commission meeting in March 2007, you stated, “when this commission comes to an end, it will have some great, practical recommendations to present to the Judicial Council, and the council will do its best to implement these recommendations statewide and at the county level.”

I ask that you please take our experience into consideration when implementing the changes into the dependency system. I also ask, **how** will these much needed changes be implemented into the Monterey Park dependency court? How will the Blue Ribbon Commission mend the system and rid it of those who abuse their powers?

This is a system that is so much bigger than my family; a system with troubles running so deep and thick, we can't help but feel overwhelmed by it. I used to be the law student with rose-colored glasses reading cases from my book, inspired by the movement of prevailing justice. But at this point, I am heartbroken and at a loss for how this could happen to my family, and I assume many others like us. How can someone like me change the system or prevent it from further abuse? I see the Blue Ribbon Commission as an important step in the right direction and I applaud you for taking the helm as Chair and recognizing the need for change. But I also see the reality of our laws and our government agencies and the difficulty of making such abuses known and implementing a real change for justice.

I thank you for your time and hope to hear from you soon.

Sincerely,



Wendy Kontos

cc: Members, Blue Ribbon Commission on Children in Foster Care:

Mr. William C. Vickrey, Administrative Director of the Courts
Administrative Office of the Courts
455 Golden Gate Avenue
San Francisco, CA 94102-3688

Diane Nunn, Director, Center for Families, Children & the Courts
Administrative Office of the Courts

Assembly Member Bill Maze
5959 S. Mooney Blvd
Visalia, CA 93277

Assembly Member Karen Bass
5750 Wilshire Blvd., Suite 565
Los Angeles, CA 90036

Senator Darrell Steinberg
1020 N Street, #576
Sacramento, CA 95814

survey title:

**Blue Ribbon Commission
Public Comment Form**current report: **Default Report**

Displaying 23 of 102 respondents

Response Type: Normal Response**Collector:** Public Comment Form (Web Link)**Custom Value:** empty**IP Address:** 75.28.114.199**Response Started:** Fri, 3/28/08 11:02:48 AM**Response Modified:** Fri, 3/28/08 11:10:30 AM**1. Please provide the following information.**

Name: - Charles J. Koosed

Title: - Superior Court Judge Riverside County

Agency/Organization: - Juvenile Div. - Dependency

Address: - 9991 County Farm Road

City/Town: - Riverside

State: - CA

ZIP/Postal Code: - 92503

Country: - USA

Email Address: - Charles.Koosed@riverside.courts.ca.gov

Phone Number: - 951-358-6449

2. Are you commenting on behalf of your organization?

Yes

3. Recommendation 1:

Agree with the selected recommendation

4. Recommendation 1A:

Agree with the selected recommendation

5. Recommendation 1B:

No Response

6. Recommendation 2

No Response

7. Recommendation 2A

No Response

8. Recommendation 2B

No Response

9. Recommendation 2C

No Response

10. Recommendation 2D

No Response

11. Recommendation 2E

No Response

12. Recommendation 2F

No Response

13. Recommendation 3

No Response

14. Recommendation 3A

No Response

15. Recommendation 3B

No Response

16. Recommendation 3C

No Response

17. Recommendation 4

No Response

18. Recommendation 4A

No Response

19. Recommendation 4B

No Response

20. Recommendation 4C

No Response

21. Recommendation 4D

No Response

22. Recommendation 4E

No Response

[Terms of Use](#) [Privacy Statement](#) [Opt Out/Opt In](#) [Contact Us](#)

Copyright ©1999-2008 SurveyMonkey.com. All Rights Reserved. No portion of this site may be copied without the express written consent of SurveyMonkey.com. 35

survey title:

**Blue Ribbon Commission
Public Comment Form**current report: **Default Report**

Displaying 92 of 102 respondents

Response Type: Normal Response**Collector:** Public Comment Form (Web Link)**Custom Value:** empty**IP Address:** 67.161.44.93**Response Started:** Tue, 5/13/08 1:42:54 PM**Response Modified:** Tue, 5/13/08 2:11:47 PM**1. Please provide the following information.**

Name: - Joanna Langs

Title: - Executive Director

Agency/Organization: - Alameda County Foster Youth Alliance

Address: - 519 17th St Suite 130

City/Town: - Oakland

State: - CA

ZIP/Postal Code: - 94612

Country: - USA

Email Address: - jlangs@fosteryouthalliance.org

Phone Number: - 510-452-7400

2. Are you commenting on behalf of your organization?

Yes

3. Recommendation 1:

Agree with the selected recommendation

4. Recommendation 1A:

Agree with the selected recommendation

5. Recommendation 1B:

Agree with the selected recommendation

6. Recommendation 2

Agree with the selected recommendation

7. Recommendation 2A

Agree with the selected recommendation

8. Recommendation 2B

Agree with the selected recommendation subject to modifications suggested below

Comment: All participants should have the opportunity to be heard in court. This is especially important in dependency review hearings in the one to two years preceding dependency dismissal, and in cases in which transfer from the dependency to delinquency systems is at question.

9. Recommendation 2C

Agree with the selected recommendation

10. Recommendation 2D

Agree with the selected recommendation

11. Recommendation 2E

Agree with the selected recommendation

12. Recommendation 2F

Agree with the selected recommendation

13. Recommendation 3

Agree with the selected recommendation

14. Recommendation 3A

Agree with the selected recommendation

15. Recommendation 3B

Agree with the selected recommendation

16. Recommendation 3C

Agree with the selected recommendation

17. Recommendation 4

Agree with the selected recommendation

18. Recommendation 4A

Agree with the selected recommendation

19. Recommendation 4B

Agree with the selected recommendation

20. Recommendation 4C

Agree with the selected recommendation

21. Recommendation 4D

Agree with the selected recommendation

22. Recommendation 4E

Agree with the selected recommendation

[Terms of Use](#) [Privacy Statement](#) [Opt Out/Opt In](#) [Contact Us](#)

Copyright ©1999-2008 SurveyMonkey.com. All Rights Reserved. No portion of this site may be copied without the express written consent of SurveyMonkey.com. 35

Lafrenz, Megan

From: Jessica LePak [jlepak@berkeley.edu]
Posted At: Friday, April 25, 2008 3:07 PM
Conversation: BRC recommendations
Posted To: CBRC

Subject: BRC recommendations

Greetings,

I'd like to offer a few recommendations for the Commission to consider.

- 1) Encourage California CASA to adopt a resolution stating that local CASA agencies should consider that foster youth, who are involved in the juvenile detention system, should have "priority" access to CASAs.
- 2) Encourage probation to clearly identify dual status youth as they enter the juvenile dentention/probation system and share this inforamtion with other parties, such as Foster Youth Services.
- 3) Ensure that all social workers are thouroughly trained on ICWA and that ICWA compliance is monitored.

Thank you.

Jessica LePak (Oneida/Mohican)
UC Berkeley, MSW candidate
Management & Planning Intern
jlepak@berkeley.edu
(415) 823-9920

"Consumption of more than you need will always infringe on somebody's human rights."

survey title:

**Blue Ribbon Commission
Public Comment Form**current report: **Default Report**

Displaying 55 of 102 respondents

Response Type: Normal Response**Collector:** Public Comment Form (Web Link)**Custom Value:** empty**IP Address:** 207.163.224.155**Response Started:** Fri, 4/25/08 2:41:03 PM**Response Modified:** Fri, 4/25/08 2:55:14 PM**1. Please provide the following information.**

Name: - Jessica LePak

Title: - Social Worker

Agency/Organization: - UC Berkeley

Address: - 1416 A Harmon St

City/Town: - Berkeley

State: - CA

ZIP/Postal Code: - 94702

Email Address: - jessica.lepak@gmail.com

Phone Number: - 415-823-9920

2. Are you commenting on behalf of your organization?

No

3. Recommendation 1:

Agree with the selected recommendation

4. Recommendation 1A:

Agree with the selected recommendation

5. Recommendation 1B:

Agree with the selected recommendation

6. Recommendation 2

Agree with the selected recommendation

7. Recommendation 2A

Agree with the selected recommendation

8. Recommendation 2B

Agree with the selected recommendation

9. Recommendation 2C

Agree with the selected recommendation

10. Recommendation 2D

Agree with the selected recommendation

11. Recommendation 2E

Agree with the selected recommendation

12. Recommendation 2F

Agree with the selected recommendation

13. Recommendation 3

Agree with the selected recommendation subject to modifications suggested below

Comment: probation should be clearly listed

14. Recommendation 3A

Agree with the selected recommendation

15. Recommendation 3B

Agree with the selected recommendation

16. Recommendation 3C

Agree with the selected recommendation

17. Recommendation 4

Agree with the selected recommendation

18. Recommendation 4A

Agree with the selected recommendation

19. Recommendation 4B

Agree with the selected recommendation

20. Recommendation 4C

Agree with the selected recommendation

21. Recommendation 4D

Agree with the selected recommendation

22. Recommendation 4E

Agree with the selected recommendation

[Terms of Use](#) [Privacy Statement](#) [Opt Out/Opt In](#) [Contact Us](#)

Copyright ©1999-2008 SurveyMonkey.com. All Rights Reserved. No portion of this site may be copied without the express written consent of SurveyMonkey.com. 35

Lafrenz, Megan

From: Referee Cynthia Loo [clloo@LASuperiorCourt.org]
Sent: Sunday, May 11, 2008 6:26 PM
To: Lafrenz, Megan
Subject: Draft Recommendations of the Blue Ribbon Commission on Children in Foster Care

Attachments: gavel2gavel_1-1.pdf



gavel2gavel_1-1.pdf
(510 KB)

I am a judicial officer with the Los Angeles County Superior Court. I sit in juvenile delinquency - and have done so for most of the eight plus years I've been a Superior Court referee. Before I was appointed to the bench, I represented children in dependency matters for approximately ten years. I've taught Juvenile Court Law for three semesters at local law schools. My views are of my own, not of the Los Angeles County Superior Court, nor of the California Court Commissioners Association.

A few months ago during a 3 day conference / continuing education program for juvenile court judicial officers I learned of the wonderful work of the Blue Ribbon Commission. Particularly I was extremely encouraged that the Commission recognized the importance of the work that is being done in Juvenile Court; as well as the significance of the judicial officers committed to the Juvenile Court.

However, I have a strong concern regarding the Blue Ribbon Commission on Foster Care's Recommendation 2A, specifically that Judges - not subordinate judicial officers - hear dependency and delinquency cases.

The recommendation seems to be inconsistent with the two year study, the first of it's kind of the juvenile delinquency courts done by the Center for Families, Children & the Courts of the Administrative Office of the Courts (CFCC) that was released on April 10, 2008. The study urged major reforms in the state's juvenile delinquency courts to improve the administration of justice and the lives of youth, victims, and other community members affected by juvenile crime.

"The first comprehensive research study of its kind in California, the Juvenile Delinquency Court Assessment 2008 is based on surveys administered to juvenile delinquency court professionals statewide and focus groups conducted with delinquency court professionals and court users in six counties."

Of it's findings, two noteworthy ones include:

- Juvenile delinquency judicial officers have significant expertise, education, and experience in juvenile law.
- Judicial officers have an average of over 10 years of judicial experience and have been in their current assignments for more than 5 years.

In response to the findings, the Judicial Council's Family and Juvenile Advisory Committee made a series of 58 recommendations including:

"The survey data show that the majority of judicial officers were involved professionally with the juvenile court prior to their first juvenile assignment, and that they continue to develop their expertise, with an average of more than 22 hours per year of formal education in juvenile law and related fields... COURT HEARINGS SHOULD CONTINUE TO BE LED BY EXPERIENCED JUDICIAL OFFICERS WHO ARE COMMITTED TO THE COURTS OF THE JUVENILE COURT and to working within the unique setting of the juvenile court to meet the needs of youth, victims, and the community."
(Emphasis added.)

I agree with the CFCC Survey and recommendations.

I personally was very surprised by the Blue Ribbon Commission's Recommendation 2A, specifically that subordinate judicial officers nor hear dependency and delinquency cases. Why? The recommendation infers there is something less desirable about subordinate judicial officers hearing juvenile matters, that judges would / could do a better job in juvenile court.

I know that I am "only a referee" but I feel all of the Commissioners and Referees that I know who sit in Los Angeles have been a tremendous asset to the Juvenile Court, even without the title of "judge." Most of the Commissioners and Referees I know who sit in juvenile have devoted most of their professional careers to juvenile and sit there because they believe in the work that is being done, are passionate about it - want to stay in juvenile - they know they can make a difference there.

Though a subordinate judicial officer, I believe I have been as asset to the Juvenile Court. I have been asked to speak on behalf of many organizations including the Sjuvenile justice, gang violence, California's "Three Strikes Law," domestic violence etc.; I've been asked by "The Bench" (the publication of California Judges Association) to write about juvenile justice, and by "Gavel to Gavel" (The LA County Superior Court magazine) twice to write about juvenile. I was awarded Juvenile Court Judge of the Year in January 2005. There are many, many other subordinate judicial officers who have given recognition of their work and commitment to the juvenile court.

In my opinion regretfully it would be impossible to attract judges to a juvenile assignment - certainly in Los Angeles - where judges assigned to juvenile are considered "slugs" (see my reference to a quote take from a Los Angeles Daily Journal article in an article I was asked to write for "Gavel to Gavel" which I will attach).

One recent Friday a few weeks ago I heard testimony on a rape case, and then an attempted murder case, and sent a youth to what was formerly called the California Youth Authority. On Wednesday I gave a ruling on a murder case. The same day, a mother left my courtroom with tears of joy in her eyes because I was closing her son's case - her son that had been gang entrenched but was now enrolled in City College and had a job at UPS.

An assignment in juvenile delinquency can be intense and draining, as well as extremely important and satisfying work. I agree that sitting in Juvenile Court should be a more respected assignment, and that putting more judicial officers with the title "judge" may increase the status of the court. However, I fail to see how taking subordinate judicial officers out of juvenile and putting a Judge who likely doesn't have the experience, nor wants to be in juvenile will be of any value to the youth and families that come into the Juvenile Court. It's bad enough that the Juvenile Court routinely gets Deputy DAs and PDs in juvenile who don't want to be there, who do not seem to fully understand / appreciate the rehabilitation aspect of the juvenile court.

One well respected judicial officer from the Orange County Superior Court commented: " The primary concern is for the best services for the people of California, not the theoretical rhetoric of whether the judicial officer is appointed by the governor."

I absolutely agree.

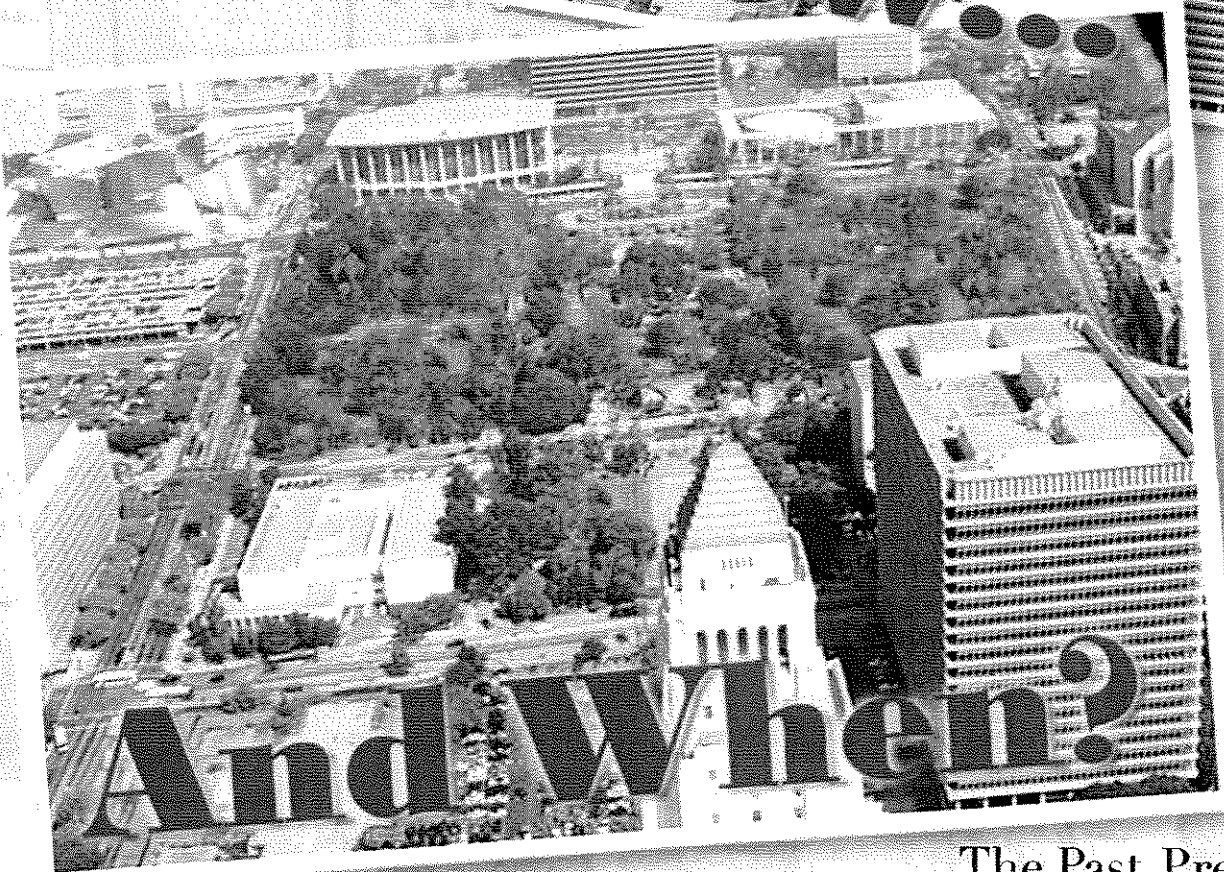
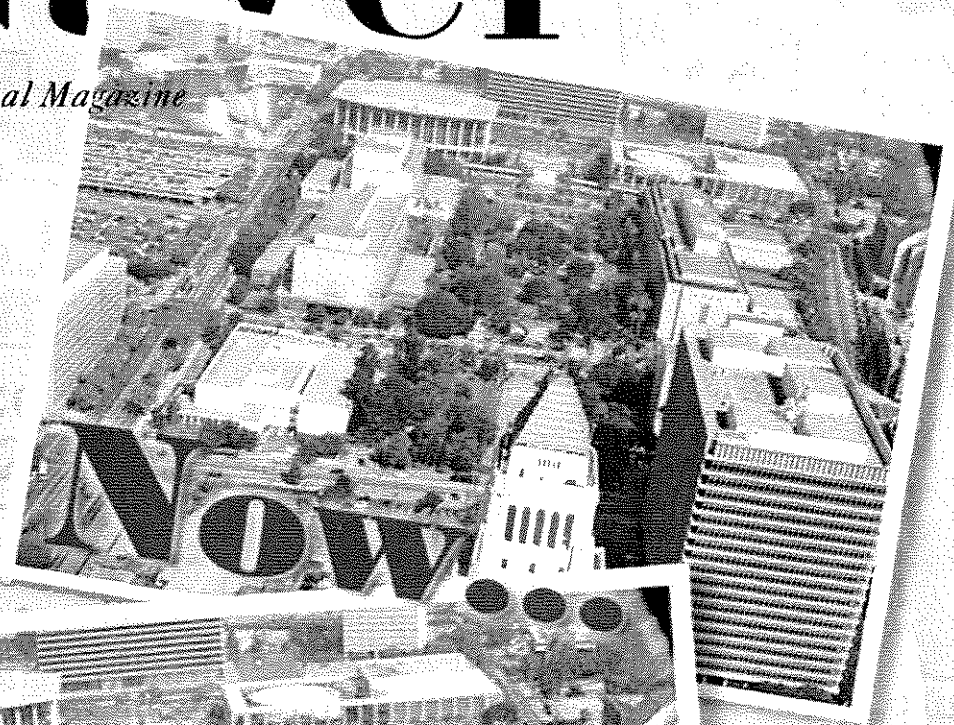
Thank you for your consideration of my comments.

Cynthia Loo
Superior Court Referee
Los Angeles County Juvenile Court

Gavel *to* Gavel

Fall 2006

Los Angeles Superior Court Judicial Magazine



The Past, Present
And Future Of
Our Courthouses

THE COVER DEPICTS THE MASTER PLAN FOR THE GRAND AVENUE REDEVELOPMENT PROJECT IN DOWNTOWN LOS ANGELES THAT MAY ULTIMATELY INCLUDE RAZING THE STANLEY MOSK COURTHOUSE AND KENNETH HAHN HALL OF ADMINISTRATION. THE CURRENT SITES OF THESE TWO BUILDINGS WOULD BE USED TO EXPAND A PROPOSED OPEN GREEN SPACE TO STRETCH FROM THE MUSIC CENTER TO CITY HALL. THE COVER PRESENTS IMAGES OF HOW THESE TWO BUILDINGS LOOK FROM THE AIR TODAY (TOP) AND A DIGITAL MANIPULATION OF THE APPEARANCE OF THE EXPANDED URBAN PARK, WITH THE COURTHOUSE AND HALL OF ADMINISTRATION NO LONGER EXTANT (BOTTOM). IN THE BACKGROUND BEHIND THESE IMAGES IS A SEGMENT OF THE ACTUAL GRAND AVENUE PLAN.

Now, When and Where? **3**

by Judge William A. MacLaughlin

How Our Courthouse System Evolved **4**

by Meredith Pierce

Antelope Valley **6**

by Judge Frank Y. Jackson

The Chatsworth Courthouse **8**

by Judge John P. Farrell

Message From The Front Line: **10**

Long Beach Endures

by Judge Bradford L. Andrews

In The Brilliance Of Optimism and Hope **12**

by Referee Cynthia Loo

The "San Marino Branch" Of **14**

The Superior Court

by Judge Michael L. Stern

The West Los Angeles Courthouse **18**

by Judge Allen Goodmann

Don't Drink Coffee Before **20**

Getting In The Courthouse Elevator!

by Judge Rita Miller

Building Projects In The Late 1980's **22**

And Early 1990's

by Judge Ricardo A. Torres, Retired

Hall of Justice **24**

by Judge Arthur Alarcon

The Huntington Park Courthouse **30**

by Judge Loren Miller, Retired

Of Note **31**

In The Brilliance Of Optimism And Hope

by Referee Cynthia Loo

"Hope begins in the dark, the stubborn hope that if you just show up and try to do the right thing, the dawn will come. You wait and watch and work; and you don't give up."

Anne Lamott

Captain America hangs upside down from an air vent in my chambers. He is confident and optimistic. He is hopeful. He has survived on my ceiling when many a ceiling tile has fallen.

The Captain and I share the tiny chambers in the Eastlake Juvenile Courthouse. Without a window, it's a little dark, so I brought in two lamps from Ikea and a number of plastic plants to lighten up the place. I've been here for a year and a half. But he, the strong silent type, refuses to tell me how long he has stood watch.

He's really dusty, and he has an outdated outfit. I think he could be as old as when probation records note that the detention facilities were built—way back in 1912.

Department 205 is my courtroom, though there is no sign outside designating it as mine. Because the judicial officers' names aren't posted outside the courtrooms, our names are not well-known to visitors. Recently, I left my courtroom, and a boy in the hallway looked up in surprise and said, "Hey, Miss! Miss 205! — I like you Miss 205!"

Within the first three months of sitting in the

Eastlake Courthouse, the air conditioning was broken for a week, a cat had died in the air ducts, and the repairmen refused to fix the air conditioning until the cat's body was removed. The smell, as you can imagine, was...noticeable. Fortunately, I have never seen any rodents in the courthouse, but I've been diligent in heeding the advice of Patricia, the Spanish-language interpreter, in never leaving food out.

The walls in the courthouse are paper-thin. From my bathroom I can hear what's on the television in the lockup. Flushing the toilet can be heard in the courtroom. Fortunately, with the fan turned on high, and the cold water running, the flushing is barely audible.

Like Boy Scouts, we are prepared. I brought in two fans for when the air conditioning dies, and an extra sweater for when it's too cold. We entertain ourselves by looking at the big thermometer my clerk, Jim, has brought in. I have a flashlight on the bench, and ample aromatherapy candles for when the power fails.

I've heard that Eastlake is the busiest, largest juvenile facility in the nation. It feels like it could be true. My clerk, Jim—the nicest, most even-keeled person I know—has started to snap at people. The probation officer, Makisha, and I aren't as good as Jim is in blowing off steam; we internalize. Makisha, who is typically so calm and

optimistic, has had heart palpitations. I come home mentally exhausted, feeling as if I've run a marathon.

In an article in the *Los Angeles Daily Journal*, on March 7, 2000, speaking on terms of anonymity, an individual asserted that judges assigned to juvenile court were "slugs."

This compelled Second District Court of Appeal Associate Justice William A. Masterson to respond, "I will retire shortly after 22 years of service on the Superior Court and the Court of Appeal. If I reflect on the importance of what I have done, the time I served in Juvenile was by far the most important and the most rewarding judging that I ever did."

I keep the article under the yellowing plastic cover on my desk in chambers to help me remember that sometimes in this old, dark, dilapidated place, there are moments when I feel better and more alive than I am at any other time. And sometimes when things are going better for a youth, I feel that I am doing something important—when I feel that something already in a young person is something that I'm able to help them get out.

Like last Friday. Eighteen-year-old Unique Brown came into court. As soon as she walked into the courtroom, before she sat down, she told me, "I have something for you." She brought me two certificates of achievement from placement and an acceptance letter into the Atlantic Transitional Housing program. She has plans to enroll in school and get a part-time job.

"I want you to hang these up, right there!" she said, pointing at the wall behind me.

Then she paused and asked, "Will you come to my graduation?"

"Sure," I said. "When is it?"

I looked to the back of the courtroom, where a large calendar was taped on the wall.

"I'm not sure," she said. "In about four years, I guess."

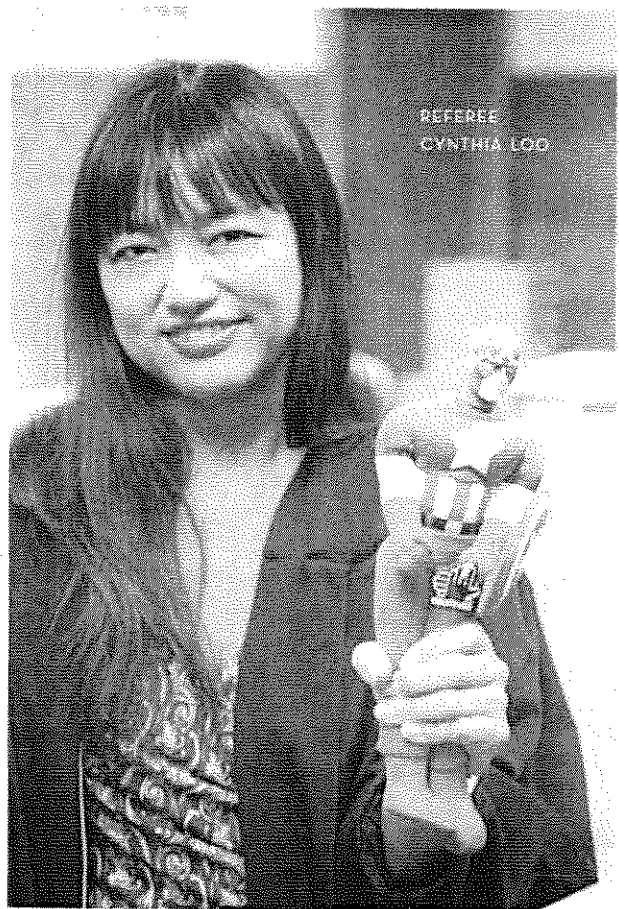
We all laughed as we realized she was talking not about her high school graduation, but about her college graduation. I told her it would be my honor

as I handed the bailiff my business card to give to Unique.

I bought some frames for Unique's certificates and acceptance letter at Sav-On this morning. I hung the frames up on my wall in chambers within the Captain's gaze.

Maybe most of the time when you mention Eastlake, an old run-down courthouse comes to mind...But the Captain will tell you in the Eastlake Juvenile Courthouse, there is the brilliance of optimism and hope. The work that we do inside these walls is as important as that done in the newest, shiniest courthouses in California.

And, of course, those new courtrooms don't have Captain America looking on. ■



survey title:

**Blue Ribbon Commission
Public Comment Form**current report: **Default Report**

Displaying 77 of 102 respondents

Response Type: Normal Response**Collector:** Public Comment Form (Web Link)**Custom Value:** empty**IP Address:** 76.172.127.38**Response Started:** Sun, 5/11/08 4:59:50 PM**Response Modified:** Sun, 5/11/08 5:21:24 PM**1. Please provide the following information.**

Name: - Cynthia Loo

Title: - Superior Court Referee

Agency/Organization: - Los Angeles County Superior Court

Address: - 1601 Eastlake Blvd. Dept. 205

City/Town: - Los Angeles

State: - CA

ZIP/Postal Code: - 90033

Country: - U.S.A.

Email Address: - CLLoo@LASuperiorCourt.org

2. Are you commenting on behalf of your organization?

No

3. Recommendation 1:

Agree with the selected recommendation

4. Recommendation 1A:

Agree with the selected recommendation

5. Recommendation 1B:

Agree with the selected recommendation

6. Recommendation 2

Agree with the selected recommendation

7. Recommendation 2A

Do not agree with selected recommendation

Comment: Strike the recommendation that ONLY JUDGES and not subordinate judicial officers hear juvenile dependency and delinquency cases.

8. Recommendation 2B

Agree with the selected recommendation

9. Recommendation 2C

Agree with the selected recommendation

10. Recommendation 2D

Agree with the selected recommendation

11. Recommendation 2E

Agree with the selected recommendation

12. Recommendation 2F

Agree with the selected recommendation

13. Recommendation 3

Agree with the selected recommendation

14. Recommendation 3A

Agree with the selected recommendation

15. Recommendation 3B

Agree with the selected recommendation

16. Recommendation 3C

Agree with the selected recommendation

17. Recommendation 4

Agree with the selected recommendation

18. Recommendation 4A

Agree with the selected recommendation

19. Recommendation 4B

Agree with the selected recommendation

20. Recommendation 4C

Agree with the selected recommendation

21. Recommendation 4D

Agree with the selected recommendation

22. Recommendation 4E

Agree with the selected recommendation

[Terms of Use](#) [Privacy Statement](#) [Opt Out/Opt In](#) [Contact Us](#)

Copyright ©1999-2008 SurveyMonkey.com. All Rights Reserved. No portion of this site may be copied without the express written consent of SurveyMonkey.com. 35

survey title:

**Blue Ribbon Commission
Public Comment Form**current report: **Default Report**

Displaying 51 of 102 respondents

Response Type: Normal Response**Collector:** Public Comment Form (Web Link)**Custom Value:** empty**IP Address:** 71.194.32.189**Response Started:** Wed, 4/23/08 9:09:06 AM**Response Modified:** Wed, 4/23/08 10:15:22 AM**1. Please provide the following information.**

Name: - Karissa Elizabeth Ann Lowell

Title: - National_Director

Agency/Organization: - National Chapter of The National Family Rights Party and Chapter

Address: - West Sherwin Avenue 601

City/Town: - 601

State: - IL

ZIP/Postal Code: - 60626

Country: - USA

Email Address: - United_Family_Rights_Association@hotmail.com

Phone Number: - 773-621-7070

2. Are you commenting on behalf of your organization?

Yes

3. Recommendation 1:

Agree with the selected recommendation subject to modifications suggested below

Comment: Each family is different and many parents are targeted by Child Protection services due to disability, economical disadvantage, and lack of opportunity to get out of the poverty level. Services need to be provided for all the families that may need housing, health care, (not unsustatial health care), food, proper education especially whereas the child is given what he needs to succeed if life. Not all families and parents need therapy and family counseling. But the children that need to be removed all from parents that take drugs and alcohol because there is a very great chance to the child being abused and neglected under the influence of either.

4. Recommendation 1A:

Agree with the selected recommendation subject to modifications suggested below

Comment: All families need to be kept together unless prima facie evidence can be proven by actual evidence like xrays, continuous emergency room visits, medical proven given by not one but by three doctors that the child has been

physically abused and neglected by his or her true and natural parents. At no time should a child be removed from his or her parents because it interferes with the bonding process between parents and their child.

5. Recommendation 1B:

Agree with the selected recommendation subject to modifications suggested below

Comment: Parents and older children over age of 10 along with social workers, psychologists, psychiatrist, (if needed) and attorneys for both the parents and all children should work together on the service plan so it is a success and not a recipe to failure.

6. Recommendation 2

Agree with the selected recommendation subject to modifications suggested below

Comment: The Court nor the Social Services knows what is in the Best Interest of the child because what is in the Best Interest of the Child is what is in the Best Interest of the family. The child is not a stand alone entity that came into this world with out the help of two parents, and the Lord Our God. The family must come first in all things, this means that children must not be removed unless prima facie evidence can be proven that the child is in imminent dangerous of losing his life to a parent or parents.

7. Recommendation 2A

Agree with the selected recommendation subject to modifications suggested below

Comment: There is not enough caring and compassionate judges to hear and listen to the parents when their child or children are unlawfully removed from their care, custody, and control. What is needed is two of two things? Arbitration and Administrative Law Judge Hearing for all parties concerned in a child protection hearing. Arbitration is needed to ensure that all members of the family are able to help write their service plan with Social Services and Arbitration is needed to ensure that Social Services will not alter their Service plan without consent from the ALJ, Arbitrator, parents, attorney for both parents and children. The Arbitrator should make sure that only that which the family needs to keep the family together and prevents any possible removal from the family is written into the plan. It should only become necessary to bring psychologists, psychiatrists, or family counselors for input on helping them implement a service plan that keeps the family intact rather than separates the family.

8. Recommendation 2B

Agree with the selected recommendation subject to modifications suggested below

Comment: All participants in dependency hearings, including children and families, should have an opportunity to be heard in court. Absolutely, and all participants should be heard and allow to provide evidence to prove their innocent and that the facts support the parents that they never abused or neglected their child. All parents that are disabled with a non-invisible disability should be able to provide evidence that just because they have a disability is no reason for their children to be removed from their care, custody, and control. It is highly unlikely that many parents with a non-visible disability will hurt their children, and parents should be able to ask their mental health providers to testify on their behalf they are able to take care of their child. Children are more at risk of being hurt by parents that drink alcohol and take drugs, than parents with disabilities.

9. Recommendation 2C

Agree with the selected recommendation subject to modifications suggested below

Comment: Local court practices should facilitate the attendance of children, parents, and caregivers in hearings. The only ones that should be allowed to attend hearing are parents, children over the age of ten years old, grandparents, aunts, uncles, family rights advocates, the attorneys for both parents, children, and attorneys for other family members if needed. There is no need to bring the foster parents into the hearing as foster care is supposed to be temporary and the foster care parents are suppose to stay unattached and not establish a bond between their foster children and their selves. No psychiatrist, psychologists, child therapists should be allowed into the hearing that testify on behalf of Social Services, but the families of these hearings should be able to bring in who and whatever witnesses, evidence they need to win their children back out of the foster care system.

10. Recommendation 2D

Do not agree with selected recommendation

Comment: Fair administration and review of dependency proceedings requires attorneys, social workers, and Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASAs) who are well qualified and have time and resources to present accurate and timely information to the courts. The United Family Rights Association and The United Family Rights Party disagrees with this statement. If the state allows CASA Volunteer to become a part of the process. They need to allow the parents to have a Family Right Advocate present on their behalf to testify that parents and children need to be kept together and that the best interest of the child is in the Best Interest of the family. Family Rights is important and no family needs to have their rights violated at all.

11. Recommendation 2E

Agree with the selected recommendation

12. Recommendation 2F

Do not agree with selected recommendation

13. Recommendation 3

Agree with the selected recommendation subject to modifications suggested below

Comment: There is a problem with that not all agencies will work together and much disagreement will come of it. The Courts along with the parents, the social worker, and the attorneys for all parties should work together to bring families back together as soon as possible.

14. Recommendation 3A

Agree with the selected recommendation subject to modifications suggested below

Comment: The National Chapter of the United Family Rights Association and National Chapter of The United Family Rights Party agrees with this statement.

15. Recommendation 3B

Do not agree with selected recommendation

16. Recommendation 3C

Do not agree with selected recommendation

Comment: The Native American Community has their own tribal laws and courts, therefore, the State and Federal Government needs to stay out of their reservations and let the Native Americans resolve their own child abuse and neglect problems according to Tribal laws.

17. Recommendation 4

Agree with the selected recommendation

18. Recommendation 4A

Agree with the selected recommendation subject to modifications suggested below

Comment: The National Chapter of The United Family Rights Party and National Chapter of The United Family Rights Association recommends that California doesn't look for government help with implementing community services. We recommend that the State of California use their own economical resources to establish and maintain these services for families so that they don't become a CPS statistic.

19. Recommendation 4B

Agree with the selected recommendation subject to modifications suggested below

Comment: There will always be barriers between the states and the federal government. The state should work on keeping families together, work with the state government for funding to keep much need services funded for all families.

20. Recommendation 4C

Agree with the selected recommendation

Do not agree with selected recommendation

Comment: Children in foster care and partnering agencies have access to reliable funding to support their access to extracurricular activities and transitional programs. These activities should include music and dance lessons, sports, school events, and independent living activities; All the above named activities should not be funded by The State, County, and tax payers should not be made to pay for these frivolous activities of children who have been placed into foster care rather than kept within their own homes so their parents could pay for all the extracurricular activities and transitional programs named above.

21. Recommendation 4D

Agree with the selected recommendation subject to modifications suggested below

Comment: The National Chapter of The United Family Rights Party and National Chapter of The United Family Rights Association agrees in part. Foster child should be given the same education that non foster child are given. The state should not have to fund extracurricular activities, but if the child is learning disabled they should have access to a tutor to ensure that they are able to keep up with their peers.

22. Recommendation 4E

Do not agree with selected recommendation

[Terms of Use](#) [Privacy Statement](#) [Opt Out/Opt In](#) [Contact Us](#)

Copyright ©1999-2008 SurveyMonkey.com. All Rights Reserved. No portion of this site may be copied without the express written consent of SurveyMonkey.com. 35

survey title:

**Blue Ribbon Commission
Public Comment Form**current report: **Default Report**

Displaying 96 of 102 respondents

Response Type: Normal Response**Collector:** Public Comment Form (Web Link)**Custom Value:** empty**IP Address:** 63.202.219.198**Response Started:** Tue, 5/13/08 5:31:08 PM**Response Modified:** Tue, 5/13/08 6:14:59 PM**1. Please provide the following information.**

Name: - Katherine Lucero

Title: - Superior Court Judge, Supervising Judge of Dependency Court

Agency/Organization: - Santa Clara County

Address: - 115 Terraine Street

City/Town: - San Jose

State: - CA

ZIP/Postal Code: - 95110

Country: - US

Email Address: - klucero@scscourt.org

Phone Number: - 408 491 4748

2. Are you commenting on behalf of your organization?

Yes

3. Recommendation 1:

Agree with the selected recommendation

4. Recommendation 1A:

Agree with the selected recommendation subject to modifications suggested below

Comment: Pre-removal services to families should include an extensive array of on demand drug and alcohol treatment. In Santa Clara County the "House on the Hill" women and children treatment program has an 80% success rate. Women should not have to be pulled into an oppressive court system to receive this type of intervention. Mental Health Services are difficult to access for women and children. Calling 911 has become the new call for help for all sorts of social ailments. If a mother needs mental health care and she is afraid of hurting her children there is only one solution- CPS. Typically, the kids are removed for her to seek help. Unfortunately the clock starts ticking and women who call for help, often end up with their parental rights terminated. Pre-removal involvement of the Father and maternal side of the family is a huge gap. A due diligence search for both should be required prior to Jurisdiction. The

Judicial Council should work with legislators to expand the 48 hour window for the Detention hearing to 72 hours, in order to make sure that each family has a Family Team Meeting prior to the detention of the child. This is currently being done in Washington, D.C.. This will give the social worker more time for social work and less pressure to handle the legal petitions and court filings. The social workers do their own petitions and are meticulous at meeting their legal timelines. They need relief to do social work. All stakeholders should capture information on race and gender at each decision making point to track this valuable statistic.

5. Recommendation 1B:

Agree with the selected recommendation

6. Recommendation 2

Agree with the selected recommendation

7. Recommendation 2A

Agree with the selected recommendation subject to modifications suggested below

Comment: The Judicial case load needs to be analyzed with collaborative justice models in mind. Specialty courts require multiple hearings, unlike other models. The number of hearings should be factored into this measurement. Judicial hours spent building collaborative, systems change and model court implementation, as well as community outreach and education should also be factored into the Judicial workload. Judicial resources are an obvious problem. We need more judges to handle these important cases in order to give the hearings the appropriate amount of time. Judges often want to "try" a juvenile assignment, but have no desire to make a long term commitment. Even worse, some judges don't want to go to Juvenile at all and leave as soon as they can. Moreover, the Presiding Judge of each court needs to provide strong leadership and give their court the appropriate number of judges to their Dependency and Delinquency divisions even when to do so may be unpopular. Each judge that is assigned to Dependency and Delinquency should be kept there for three to five years on staggered terms to preserve leadership from the bench. The lack of judicial commitment to this area of the court creates a serious leadership gap. The only thing that appears to allow a Dependency Court to evolve as a model that creates justice is judicial leadership. There are so many key stakeholders that to have a gap in Judicial leadership actually causes the ship to become unbalanced and leads to poor outcomes for families and children. In order to predict follow through, reform, consistency and a reverence for the law itself, the judge must be the center of that system. Change over in judges in Dependency and Delinquency court is not community centered. In some states, judges are elected or appointed to the Juvenile and Family Court. This allows for the recruitment and retention of potential judges that actually want to specialize in this field. Many attorneys who practice Family and Juvenile law do not apply or run for judge because their background and professional profiles are not the usual ones of those that get appointed or elected. Making the bench a specialized bench would help to attract the dedicated bench officers that are needed to make long term commitments and would promote stability with the stakeholders and the families. I am not necessarily advocating for this in California, however, one can see the value of the specialized bench when it comes to providing consistency for the community.

8. Recommendation 2B

Agree with the selected recommendation subject to modifications suggested below

Comment: Relatives should be identified as soon as possible; however, once the petition has been filed, relative care placement becomes sometimes insurmountable due to strict foster care licensing standards. These barriers must be eliminated for family and non relative extended family members. These licensing issues show up around space, number of beds in the home, background checks and prior CPS involvement. Identifying the relative is not enough

Removing the barriers to placement is what is needed.

9. Recommendation 2C

Agree with the selected recommendation subject to modifications suggested below

Comment: Attendance of children at hearings is positive, however, court facilities must be child and family centered. Having young children wait for hours in an overcrowded waiting room crafted for adults is harmful to that child's emotional and mental well-being. In some cases actual physical safety is jeopardized. Furthermore, commingling this population with other adult criminal populations is not safe. Separate bathrooms must also be available. More money must be made available for security if kids are to be in court. Court Orders should be issued in other languages. At this time the parent leaves with the Court with their case plan in English. The issue with this communication gap is obvious, especially when the Child Welfare agency is unable to assign a case worker that speaks the parent's language. The stress of court causes the parent to leave bewildered. It is not helpful to then have the case plan and court orders in a language that the parent does not understand. Literacy issues also cause a communication gap. Those who are illiterate in both their native language and English creates an almost insurmountable hardship to the system and, sadly, there is a lack of systemic strategies to address this problem.

10. Recommendation 2D

Agree with the selected recommendation

11. Recommendation 2E

Agree with the selected recommendation

12. Recommendation 2F

Agree with the selected recommendation subject to modifications suggested below

Comment: Court measurements should include the ability to capture the underlying issues that have come before the court, i.e., substance abuse and domestic violence, in order to design programming around the needs of the community and to train and equip the judicial officers accordingly on the most significant issues that it must handle day to day.

13. Recommendation 3

Agree with the selected recommendation

14. Recommendation 3A

Agree with the selected recommendation

15. Recommendation 3B

Agree with the selected recommendation subject to modifications suggested below

Comment: Child Welfare cases are about drugs, alcohol and family violence. National, State and local data show that anywhere from 60% to 80% of our cases involve drugs and alcohol. Substance Abuse is a chronically relapsing mental health issue that is currently being handled pursuant to very strict timelines with very few resources.

Essentially the addict who is generally the Mother, must stop using drugs and get her life together within six months in order to avoid the loss of her child under the age of three. The substance abuse recovery model and the statutory timelines are incongruent. And the child over the age of three that loses their mother and father forever rarely does well in our system and commonly penetrates further into other court systems. In some jurisdictions, the waiting list to get into treatment is three to four months. If the Dependency Court is not collaborating with the Department of Drugs and Alcohol to get services to the parent more timely, the parent will not have a fair opportunity at gaining custody of their child. Each County Mental Health and Drug and Alcohol Department must be a key leader in the reform of the Child Welfare/Court system. Our courts are full of people of color and poor people. It seems that since we know that people of color do not abuse or neglect their children or abuse drugs at a higher rate than other populations that the issue lies in the access to drug and alcohol treatment prior to entering the child welfare system. Once the family enters the system, the timelines are triggered and the chances at success are slim unless there is an effort by the agencies to collaborate. Dependency Drug Courts work. Dependency Drug Courts require collaboration, time, attention to the family and a prioritization by each county to serve this marginalized population. Child Welfare court involved families should have priority on the waiting lists for drug treatment and mental health services. Federal dollars should be used for drug treatment and mental health services. Each county should be rewarded for the reduction of subsequent positive toxicology births of the parents that they have served to stem the tide of the multiple drug addicted babies being born to the same mother even though she has been known to the system for years. Status quo is not working. 76% of the parents in Dependency Drug Court in Santa Clara County are reunified with their children. That compared to 44% in the non dependency drug court population. Only 6% of the Dependency Drug Court mothers have a second drug addicted baby as compared to 33% in the non dependency drug court population! After a five year independent national study of the Dependency Drug Court, we know what works. Collaboration works. It heals people. People emerge useful citizens and loving parents. It is because of the time and resources concentrated in collaborative courts that these families rarely return to us. Dollars are saved at the back end if spent on the front end.

16. Recommendation 3C

Agree with the selected recommendation

17. Recommendation 4

Agree with the selected recommendation

18. Recommendation 4A

Agree with the selected recommendation

19. Recommendation 4B

Agree with the selected recommendation

20. Recommendation 4C

Agree with the selected recommendation

21. Recommendation 4D

Agree with the selected recommendation

22. Recommendation 4E

Agree with the selected recommendation

[Terms of Use](#) [Privacy Statement](#) [Opt Out/Opt In](#) [Contact Us](#)

Copyright ©1999-2008 SurveyMonkey.com. All Rights Reserved. No portion of this site may be copied without the express written consent of SurveyMonkey.com. 35